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MAXWELL'S

LIFE OF WELLINGTON

ABRIDGED AND EDITED BY REV. L. T. DODD, B.A.

COMMENDATORY

Such was he: his work is done.
But while the races of mankind endure,
Let his great example stand
Colossal, seen of every land,
And keep the soldier firm, the statesman pure:
Till in all lands and thro' all human story
The path of duty be the way to glory.

TENNYSON'S *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington.*

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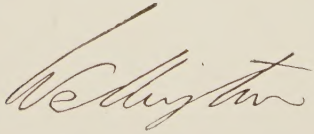
From the picture by Sir Thomas Lawrence, P.R.A.



THE LIFE OF

WELLINGTON

BY

WILLIAM HAMILTON MAXWELL

ABRIDGED, AND NEWLY
EDITED, WITH NOTES, ETC.

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[THE AUTHOR'S DEDICATION TO QUEEN VICTORIA]

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY

THIS LIFE

OF

FIELD-MARSHAL THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON

IS

BY HER MAJESTY'S GRACIOUS PERMISSION

WITH EVERY SENTIMENT OF LOYALTY AND RESPECT

HUMBLY INSCRIBED

BY HER DUTIFUL SUBJECT AND SERVANT

W. H. MAXWELL

LIFE OF ARTHUR, DUKE OF WELLINGTON

CHAPTER I

ARTHUR WELLESLEY, Duke of Wellington, fourth son of Garret, second Earl of Mornington, by Anne, eldest daughter of Arthur Hill, Viscount Dungannon, was born at Dungan Castle, on May 1st, 1769.

The earlier education of the distinguished brothers, the Earl of Mornington and the Hon. Arthur Wellesley, commenced at Eton. In due time Lord Mornington removed to Oxford, and there completed his studies; while, with excellent judgment, his younger brother Arthur was removed to the Military College of Angiers, in the department of the Maine and Loire, as a fitter school for one already destined to the profession of arms. That Wellington, beyond a fair and creditable proficiency, exhibited no marked superiority at Angiers, is acknowledged; while Napoleon, his contemporary at Brienne, if assertion be true, displayed martial propensities in everything connected with his studies or his sports.

On March 7th, 1787, Arthur Wellesley obtained his first commission, being gazetted to an ensigncy in the 73rd Regiment; and on the 25th of the following December, he was promoted to a lieutenancy in the 76th. In the succeeding month, he exchanged into the 41st, and on June 25th was appointed to the 12th Light Dragoons. On June 30th, 1791, he was promoted to a company in the 58th Foot; and on October 31st, 1792, obtained a troop in the 18th Light Dragoons.

At the general election, which occurred during the summer of 1790, he was returned to the Irish Parliament for Trim, a borough whose patronage belonged to the house of Mornington. His personal exterior must have been very different from what those who have only seen him in after life would imagine. Sir Jonah Barrington describes him as "ruddy faced, and juvenile in appearance;" adds, "that he was popular among the young men of his age and station;" and, alluding to his parliamentary début, he observes, "his address was unpolished; he spoke occasionally, and never with success; and evinced no promise of that unparalleled celebrity which he reached afterwards."

That Barrington was a very superficial observer, the following anecdotes will prove:

"The first time I ever visited the gallery of the House, was on the opening of the session of 1793, and I was accompanied by a friend, a barrister of high standing, and a person of acknowledged judgment. He was one of a celebrated society, termed, 'The Monks of the Screw,' and consequently was on intimate terms with all the leading men of the day, including Grattan, Cuff (afterwards Lord Tyrawly), Langrish, Parnell, Wolf, etc., etc. As each member entered the House, my friend named them in succession, and generally at the same time rapidly sketched their characters. A young man, dressed in a scarlet uniform, with very large epaulets, caught my eye, and I inquired who he was. 'That,' replied my friend, 'is Captain Wellesley, a brother of Lord Mornington's, and one of the aide-de-camps of the Lord Lieutenant.' 'I suppose he never speaks,' I added. 'You are wrong; he does speak sometimes, and when he does, believe me, it is always to the purpose.' The subject which occupied the attention of the House that night, was one of deep importance in Irish politics. A further concession to the claims of the Roman Catholics had been recommended in a speech from the throne, and an animated debate resulted. Captain Wellesley spoke on the occasion; and his remarks were terse and pertinent, his delivery fluent, and his manner unembarrassed. I particularly recollect a casual allusion to parliamentary reform produced from him the parenthetic observation,—'By the by, were such a measure introduced, I should most strenuously oppose it.'"

The professional advancement of Captain Wellesley was steadily progressive. On April 30th, 1793, he was gazetted major of the 33rd Foot, on the resignation of Major Gore;

and on the 30th of the following September, he succeeded to the lieutenant-colonelcy of the regiment, *vice* Lieutenant-Colonel Yorke, who retired from the service.

For the last three years the political horizon of Europe had been seriously overcast : affairs daily became more gloomy—"coming events threw their shadows before"—and the frightful spread of democratic principles, the murder of the French monarch, the increase of the Republican army to 450,000 men, and the extraordinary success that attended these raw and undisciplined levies, roused Britain into energy ; and compelled her to prepare herself for a contest, on which not only her liberties, but her existence as an empire, were dependent.

France was fearfully convulsed ; the reign of terror was at its height ; and though persecuted to the death, the royalist party—from their limited means unequal to make head against the democrats—still maintained a courage and displayed an attitude of resistance, worthy of a better fortune. Hence there was a hope, that if the Bourbon party were supported from abroad, a reaction might be produced in France, and the alarming spread of republicanism be yet arrested. To effect this object, a landing on the coast of Brittany was proposed, —an expedition prepared with all possible despatch,—and the command entrusted to the Earl of Moira.

Among other regiments that received orders of readiness for the coast of France, the 33rd was included. Ardent as Lieutenant-Colonel Wellesley was for an opportunity of meeting an enemy in the field, and that too in the command of a battalion, one cause alloyed his satisfaction, and occasioned him painful uneasiness. His circumstances were embarrassed—he wanted means to discharge his debts—and he determined not to quit the country, and leave unsatisfied creditors behind him. It is true that his parliamentary privilege secured him from personal annoyance ; but to have obligations he was unable to discharge, to one with his sensitive feelings, was intolerable. One course only was left, and without hesitation he adopted it. He called upon a gentleman with whom he had extensive dealings, enumerated his debts, stated his inability to pay them, and proposed to allocate the whole of his disposable income for their discharge, that the whole might be liquidated by degrees. The honourable proposition was accepted, a power of attorney left with Mr. Dillon, that gentleman accepting the trust, which he continued to hold until the last shilling of Colonel Wellesley's

liabilities was discharged. Adversity tests principles severely. A man, exempted from financial inconveniences, can only conjecture how far his firmness would have enabled him to overcome, with scanty resources, a pecuniary embarrassment. Yet he who was indebted to a tradesman for assistance, and by a rigid limitation of his personal expenses was enabled to pay off his debts, lived to be possessor of a princely income, after, by the integrity of his name alone, supporting an army in the field, when his military chest was almost left without a guinea.

The intended descent upon the French coast, however, was never effected. The destination of the troops, now on board transports, was changed ; and instead of proceeding to the coast of France, the troops were ordered to sail directly for Ostend. A gloomier prospect never opened on an army about to take the field. Tournay had already surrendered, and Lord Moira prudently determined to retire the garrison from Ostend.

In pursuance of his plan, Lord Moira issued orders for the embarkation of the garrison ; and although this service was ably executed in a single day, the republicans, by rapid marches, brought their advanced guards to the city gates, before the last of the English troops had filed from the sally-port.

Lord Moira, in the meantime, had taken the route of Ecloo and Ghent ; and, though moving in dreadful weather, and in the face of a superior force, his march was successfully executed. The rain, during the entire time, fell in torrents ; and as the troops were unprovided with camp equipage of any kind, they suffered equally from fatigue and the inclemency of the weather The enemy pressed them closely, and on July 6th they were vigorously attacked at Alost. With their accustomed impetuosity the Republicans penetrated the place—a sharp *mêlée* occurred in the streets—the British troops behaved most gallantly, and the French were bravely repulsed.

The retreat continued—first on Breda, and afterwards to Bois-le-Duc. At first, the regressive movement was steadily effected ; but, as the ground became more difficult and the road narrowed, the light cavalry got mobbed with a Household battalion, and the whole were thrown into confusion. The French hussars advanced to charge ; and the situation of the embarrassed troops was most alarming. Perceiving the disorder, Colonel Wellesley deployed the 33rd into line, immediately in rear of the Household troops. Opening his centre files, he permitted the broken cavalry to retire, and then closing up

his ranks again, occupied the road, and held the enemy in check. The French advanced with their usual confidence; and the 33rd, reserving their fire, waited coolly until the enemy were forming for a charge. At that moment the regiment received their colonel's order, and delivered a close and searching volley, that fell with murderous effect into the crowded ranks of the Republicans; and their rapid and well-directed fusillade completed the enemy's repulse. In turn, the French were obliged to fall back in confusion; and the English retreat was effected without any molestation, excepting a slight cannonade, that, from its distance, was ineffective.

The sufferings endured by the British army during the continuance of this harassing movement, have been frequently described by those who shared its dangers and privations. Retreats, more recently effected during the subsequent struggles on the Continent, have thrown its horrors in the shade; but still, the hardships sustained by the allies from want and cold, have seldom been exceeded. A desperate season, long and rapid marches, dark nights, broken roads, and an unfriendly population, rendered this regressive movement one of the most calamitous on record. The casualties of each day's march increased alarmingly; weak men were gradually left upon the road; and the hardiest, as the retreat continued, began to lag behind, and fell into the hands of the enemy, or perished for want of shelter. The commissariat was bad,—the medical department worse. A military writer, who was present during the whole of the retreat, says: "Removing the sick in waggons without sufficient clothing to keep them warm, in that rigorous season, had indeed sent some hundreds to their graves; whilst the shameful neglect that then pervaded the medical department, rendered the hospitals nothing better than slaughter-houses for the wounded and the sick."

In this commencement of his military career, there was nothing to excite the hopes of a youthful soldier; and from Colonel Wellesley's opening campaign, some experience and but little glory could be gained. The most profitable school in war is often found a rough one; but if privations are repaid by conquest, the end achieved more than compensates the labour. The disastrous campaign in Holland had no results but constant disappointment; and the tide of victory had turned against the arms of England ere Wellesley's first field was fought. Before the raw levies of the Republic, the best troops in Europe were constantly receding. Step by step, the

British and their allies were forced from the Low Countries,—everywhere the French arms were triumphant,—and victory followed fast on victory, until Europe was nearly at the mercy of the Directory.

The British brigades, on returning to England after their unfortunate campaign, might have been said, in the words of Francis I., nearly to "have lost everything but their honour." In effective strength the regiments were seriously reduced; for of those who returned to their native shores, a large proportion, rendered *hors-de-combat* by past suffering, were of necessity invalided and discharged, but the threatening aspect of affairs had roused the energies of the nation, and immense exertions were consequently made to recruit the regiments to their full establishments, and place the army once more in a fit state for active service.

Among other corps, the 33rd, after its return home, had laboured to replace the casualties of the late campaign; and Colonel Wellesley's exertions had proved so successful, that in a short time his regiment was reported effective, and received orders of readiness for the East Indies. In April, 1796, the 33rd sailed; and after stopping for refreshments at the Cape, where their colonel, whom illness had detained, rejoined his corps, it proceeded for its destination, and disembarked at Calcutta early in February, 1797.

Indian affairs were indeed in a most perilous position: the native princes were ready to revolt; and French influence was employed, at their respective Courts, to foment the disaffection towards the English, and hold out promises of assistance, and that on such an extended scale, as should enable them to throw off a yoke they secretly detested, and recover the provinces, of which the conquests of a century had dispossessed them. The longer duration of British dominion in the East depended on the adoption of a course of policy that should combine boldness with discretion. Sir John Shore had been recalled; and no little difficulty arose at home in finding a suitable successor. A choice, however, was happily made; and, fortunately for Britain, to the Earl of Mornington the government of India was confided.

The noble lord landed from *La Virginie* frigate on May 17th; and proceeding to Calcutta, was there received by the proper authorities, and inducted to his high command with the customary formalities. Lord Mornington lost no time in correctly ascertaining his existing relations with the native

princes: and certainly in a position more fraught with danger, no Governor-General had ever been placed before.

Although the British interests were threatened on many points, the great cause of all alarm centred in the capital of Mysore. The Sultaun was a deadly and a dangerous enemy. Taught from a child to detest the English, he seemed to have inherited, with the musnud, his father's hatred of the British name, hence the policy of his life was directed to one steady purpose, the overthrow of British influence in India—and even in the visions of the night, as it afterwards appeared, he dreamed only of the destruction of the infidels.

In disposition, Tippoo was truculent as his father, but possessed a greater portion of duplicity. His character was a singular medley. In some points he was wise; in more, he was weak. He was quick, cunning, and revengeful,—fond of intrigue, and patient and persevering in effecting the object at which he aimed. He was profuse and parsimonious,—one while engaged in pursuits worthy of a monarch, and at another, idling time away in admiring his *bijouterie*, or chronicling his dreams. A bigot in faith, he persecuted all from whom he differed. As a Naib, or forerunner of the prophets, in whose advent Mahommedans believe, Tippoo was an active proselytiser, and by no means scrupulous in the means, provided the end was accomplished. In politics he was faithless: in religion he was a monster; and if moderate abilities are excepted, with great personal intrepidity, and a strong affection for his children and servants, the Sultaun of Mysore had not one redeeming quality.

"In the infancy of English glory, a foe like the Sultaun was truly formidable. His military talents were considerable; and, with excellent judgment, and untrammelled by Eastern presumption, he saw the defects of native discipline, and laboured to remove them. He had striven, and with success, through the agency of Europeans, to introduce into his camp the improved systems of modern warfare; and the army of the Mysore had, within a few years, undergone a mighty change. Many confidential communications that passed between the Sultaun and his chief officers, were found after the fall of the capital; and prove with what assiduity he had devoted his whole attention to the establishment of a force that, by physical and numerical superiority, should crush a power he detested, and overthrow England's dominion in the East. Tippoo's infantry were tolerably drilled—his artillery very respectable; and though his numerous horse were quite unequal to meet and repel the com-

bined charge of British cavalry, as irregulars they were excellent; alike dangerous to an enemy from their rapid movement—the audacity with which their sudden assault was made—and the celerity, when repulsed, with which their retreat was effected."

Previous to the appointment of Lord Mornington, and while his communications with Sir John Shore were of the friendliest description, Tippoo had secretly despatched envoys to the Isle of France, to effect an alliance with the Republicans, and obtain their assistance in the grand attempt he was maturing against the English. The extent of his own military preparations could not be concealed, and the suspicions of the Presidency of Madras, in consequence, had been already strongly excited. A strong remonstrance was in consequence addressed by the British Governor to the Sultaun; and Tippoo's explanatory reply shows to what unblushing falsehoods an Eastern diplomatist will resort when his interests require it.

"By the favour of God," he observes, "the conditions or obligations of peace established between us, have obtained the utmost degree of strength and firmness; under the circumstances of their being firmly observed and adhered to, of the daily increasing union and friendship, and of the constant intercourse of correspondence, the report cannot be possibly entitled to credit." He proceeds: "My friendly pen writes this. I hope your lordship will be pleased to gratify me by writing of it. I have no other intention or thought, than to give increase to our friendship." His conclusion ran thus: "Let your lordship continue to gratify me with gladdening letters, notifying your welfare." No stronger proof can be given of the deep duplicity of the Sultaun than the simple fact, that, at the very time he addressed Lord Mornington in these terms, he was in actual correspondence with Buonaparte, then at Cairo with the Egyptian army.

Convinced, by every circumstance, that Tippoo was only manœuvering to gain time to enable him to receive the assistance and supplies promised by the French Republicans, Lord Mornington continued his preparations, and issued a declaration of war on February 22nd, 1799.

"In the November of the preceding year (1798) all the disposable troops had been assembled and encamped at Wallajahbad, under the orders of Colonel Wellesley, with whom the general superintendence remained until February following, when General Harris arrived to assume the personal command of the

army, which had proceeded to Vellore. The attention which Colonel Wellesley had bestowed on the discipline and well-being of the troops, and in practising them in combined field movements, with the admirable system he adopted for supplying the bazaars, which were kept constantly well provided, attracted general notice and approbation ; and when General Harris joined the army to take command, after receiving the reports of the heads of corps and departments, he was so pleased with all Colonel Wellesley's arrangements, that he conceived it to be an imperative duty to publish a general order, conveying commendation of the merits of Colonel Wellesley during his temporary command.

An Indian campaign was never opened by an army in such force or equal effectiveness. The European regiments were healthy and serviceable ; and the native troops emulated the British in gallantry, and in the hour of trial were not inferior to their European comrades, either in discipline or fidelity. The organisation of the Indian army was indeed perfect in every arm ; and its attachment to the British Government most ardent. Previous to that period, the native regiments had been but partially officered by Europeans ; and, excepting a captain-commandant, adjutant, surgeon, and six or eight subalterns, the duties of the battalions were generally performed by Mussulmans and Hindus. Their gallantry in the field, their obedience in camp or when marching to the orders of their officers, and the internal harmony with which they lived among themselves, rendered these corps both manageable and trustworthy. This will appear the more remarkable, when the difference in caste, and the prejudices in religious observances, are remembered. Their composition embraced five distinct classes, each differing from the other in customs and belief ; and so rooted in their mutual antipathies, that any contact with the other was regarded as pollution.

The progress of the grand army was, from many causes, necessarily slow, but on the evening of April 1st, the allied army bivouacked within four leagues of the capital of Mysore.

Seringapatam is situated in lat. 12° 26′ N. 76° 51′ E. It is 1,170 miles distant from Calcutta, 622 from Bombay, and 200 from Madras. The city stands on the angle of an island, formed by the junction of the rivers Cauvery and Coleroon. Its appearance was extremely imposing, as the works were of immense extent and unnecessarily massive in their construction. The fort was encompassed with two distinct walls, each having

ditches, bastions, and a number of cavaliers—a species of defence in great favour with Indian engineers. On the different faces of the fort the gates were secured by numerous outworks. As a fortress, Seringapatam was generally strong ; but an immensity of labour and materials had been expended in useless and ill-designed defences.

Colonel Wellesley was ordered to direct the attack, and proper dispositions were accordingly made to storm the entrenchments.

The troops ordered for the assault moved forward in two columns. During the previous hour the fire of the English batteries had been turned entirely on the enemy's works, and, ceasing when the advance of the storming party was observed, it was then directed on an angle of the fort, from whose guns the assailants had most annoyance to apprehend.

The attack had been arranged with excellent judgment, and was most gallantly executed. The entrenchments were stormed, occupied by the assailants, and, before daylight, tolerably secured from the fire of the place, and the siege operations having nearly reached completion, Major-General Baird volunteered to command the storming party. The troops ordered for the assault were composed of Europeans and natives. The whole were placed before daylight in the trenches, and noon was properly chosen as the best hour of attack.

To those looking on, and who neither shared in the glory nor the danger of the assault, the period of suspense, though brief, was most distressing. A field-officer, recently dead, thus describes the feelings of the troops who were watching the result of the storm :

"About a quarter past one p.m., as we were anxiously peering, telescope in hand, at the ford, and the intermediate ground between our batteries and the breach, a sharp and sudden discharge of musquetry and rockets, along the western face of the fort, announced to us that General Baird and the column of assault were crossing the ford ; and immediately afterwards, we perceived our soldiers, in rather loose array, rushing towards the breach. The moment was one of agony ; and we continued, with aching eyes, to watch the result, until, after a short and appalling interval, we saw the acclivity of the breach covered with a cloud of crimson,—and in a very few minutes afterwards, observing the files passing rapidly to the right and left at the summit of the breach, I could not help exclaiming, 'Thank God ! the business is done.'

"The firing continued in different parts of the place until about two o'clock, or a little afterwards; when, the whole of the works being in the possession of our troops, and the St. George's ensign floating proudly from the flagstaff of the southern cavalier, announced to us that the triumph was completed."

The morning of the 4th saw the green-streaked banner of the Sultaun expanded from the loftiest flagstaff of the fort. On the 5th, the British ensign was floating proudly on the breeze; for that sun had risen upon a captured city, a routed host, and a dead tyrant; and an empire, acquired by a father's usurpation, was extinguished in the bloody grave of a more perfidious son. "The tyrant of Mysore was gone to his account; and, assuredly, a more tiger-hearted monster never disgraced the musnud. His conduct to his European prisoners, after Hyder's death, was atrocious. Of those taken with Baillie, the greater proportion perished from starvation and disease; while Matthews and his officers, all of whom had surrendered under the usual conditions of honourable warfare, were treated with barbarous inhumanity; and, with few exceptions, all were murdered in detail." His truculence ended only with his life; and his last acts were in fit keeping with a career marked all through by treachery and blood.

Among many curious matters, which the occupation of the Sultaun's palace brought to light, probably his library produced the most singular disclosures. The volumes were kept in chests, each having a separate wrapper; so that they were, in general, in excellent preservation. Some were very richly adorned, and beautifully illuminated in the manner of the Roman missals. In the archives there, the whole of the French correspondence was discovered, with many secret and confidential communications from the Indian Government to their *employees*, that had been intercepted by Tippoo's emissaries, and, of course, never reached the individuals to whom they were addressed. These seem, however, to have occasioned little interest; for, with one exception, the seals remained unbroken. Some manuscripts, in the Sultaun's handwriting, were found in a private depositary, and marked the anomalous character of the man. They seemed intended to register alike his thoughts and acts. In some pages his dreams, with their interpretations, were recorded; in others, were memoranda with instructions for the murder of certain prisoners; and these were copiously intermingled with pious aspirations to the Almighty, expressed

with Christian-like humility, becoming rather a martyr than a murderer. One melancholy record was found in the compartment of an old spice-box,—it was in the well-known handwriting of the unfortunate General Matthews, and simply contained the exact date of his own murder!

The property and stores found in Seringapatam were immensely valuable; but the plunder, of which no estimate can be made, must have been enormous. In looking calmly back, after an interval of forty years, at the operations preceding and attendant on the capture of Seringapatam, its immense political advantages apart, it had little, as a military achievement, to warrant the importance so generally attached to it. But let it not be supposed that we undervalue the conquest of the capital of Mysore. Politically viewed, its consequences were of paramount importance. No better testimony can be adduced than that of Lord Mornington, who, in a communication to the Indian Government, thus expressed his opinions:—"The fall of Seringapatam, under all the circumstances which accompanied that event, has placed the whole of the kingdom of Mysore, with all its resources, at the disposal of your Government; and the only power in India to which the French could look for assistance, or which could be deemed formidable to your interests, is now deprived of all vigour, if not entirely extinct."

CHAPTER II

It was particularly desirable that the successful issue of the siege of the capital of Mysore, should be followed up by the pacification of the country. By temperate measures this object was most likely to be achieved; and when Colonel Wellesley was appointed to the command of Seringapatam, he used every means to conciliate the adherents of the late Sultaun, and restore the general confidence of the Mussulman population. The surrender of Tippoo's eldest son, Futteh Hyder, of Purneah, his dewan or minister, and Meer Cummin ud Deen, assisted much in bringing round a general submission of the other sirdars. Circular letters were addressed to the commanders of the Sultaun's hill forts, requiring their being surrendered up; which demand was in every instance obeyed. The army

was promptly disbanded,—the silledar horse retiring to their respective homes, and the French mercenaries of Lally and Chapuy being sent into the Carnatic, prisoners of war.

A regular garrison having been established in Seringapatam, a commission was issued by the Governor-General, to partition the conquered territories among the allies, according to preliminary treaties. The commissioners nominated by Lord Mornington were Lieutenant-General Harris, Lieutenant-Colonel Barry Close, the Hon. Colonel Wellesley, the Hon. Henry Wellesley, and Lieutenant-Colonel Kirkpatrick, with Captains Malcolm and Munro as secretaries.

In adjusting this important affair, the interests of the allies were faithfully consulted, and but one difficulty arose to Lord Mornington, and that regarded the succession to the throne. It was for him to decide to which claimant the musnud should be given ; and thus choose between the descendant of the Hindu princes, and the grandson of the Mohammedan usurper. When neither aspirant could assert an absolute right, and the decision of the Governor-General was conclusive, it required that much caution should be used in adjudicating claims on which a throne depended. Serious results were involved in this important question ; and not only the tranquillity of the Mysore, but the future peace of India, rested on the sound exercise of Lord Mornington's discretionary powers. That the restoration of the Rajah's family would deserve, if not secure, a deep return of gratitude, might be reasonably anticipated ; while, from the grandchildren of Hyder Ally nothing could be expected but the same rancorous and enduring hatred, which marked from the cradle to the grave, the career of their guilty parent. The choice of the Governor-General was prudently made ; and Kistna Rajah Oodiaver was placed upon the musnud. The appointment would of course delight the greater portion of the population of Mysore, they being Hindus ; while the sirdars and chief officers of the deceased Sultaun were easily reconciled to a change in the dynasty of the kingdom,—some having been already pensioned by the Indian Government, and more restored by Colonel Wellesley to the trusts and places they had formerly held, before the succession of Tippoo's family was extinguished. No policy, indeed, could have been wiser than that pursued by the Governor of Seringapatam. By the means adopted, he secured the services of Tippoo Sultaun's intelligent and experienced functionaries ; while their fidelity was sufficiently guaranteed by a knowledge that retention of

office entirely depended upon the correctness with which their respective duties were discharged.

To the commissioners, the decision of the Governor-General as to the succession to the throne was officially communicated, and orders given that the necessary steps should be taken for a formal restoration of the youthful Rajah.

It had been arranged by the Indian Government, that the permanent residence of the young Rajah should be removed from Seringapatam, and established in the ancient city of Mysore; and thither, and with fitting honours, himself and his family were conducted. The religious peculiarities of the Hindus were duly regarded in preparing for the ceremonial—and the task was entrusted to the Brahmin priests of selecting a fortunate day for the inauguration of their prince. Colonel Wellesley, with General Harris, and Meer Allum Bahauder, were present, and officially assisted. Additional troops had been ordered to Mysore, to give effect to the act of restoration; and under a triple volley of musketry from the guard of honour, and a royal salute from the batteries of Seringapatam, the signet of authority was placed in the boy's hand, and he was then conducted to the musnud by the general and Meer Allum, and, in due form, proclaimed Rajah of Mysore.

With the inauguration of the young Rajah, the labours of the commission terminated, and it was immediately dissolved. To Colonel Wellesley the command of the Mysore was confided, and his appointment was officially announced on September 11th, 1799.

At Seringapatam, head-quarters were established. Though the light and airy palace of the Dowlat Baug was used by Colonel Wellesley for an occasional residence, everything was done to gratify the feelings and conciliate the prejudices of the vanquished. The mosque where the remains of Hyder Ally and Tippoo Sultaun were deposited, was rigidly respected, —kinkaubs from the tomb of Mecca ornamented the mausoleum, —fresh flowers were daily strewn upon the floor,—and an English guard protected the devotees who visited the last resting-place of the Sultauns of Mysore, a place, sanctified in their sight by all those holy associations which the true followers of the Prophet are taught to venerate.

Within the Dowlat Palace, one hall was painted with different scenes, imagined from the defeat of Colonel Baillie. Although these subjects could be anything but gratifying to the feelings of Colonel Wellesley, painfully recalling as they

did the slaughter of the bravest band that ever perished beneath the overwhelming masses of a tyrant—still, they were not only respected by the British governor, but one, which had been accidentally damaged, was restored at his private expense.

No wonder, then, that Colonel Wellesley's fortunate appointment to the command of the Mysore, and the conciliatory measures he adopted, accomplished the happiest results; while "his active superintendence, discernment, impartiality, and decision, in the arduous and important duties of the civil, as well as the military administration of the command, were such as to have fully warranted his brother's judicious selection, and deserved and obtained the gratitude of the conquered people."

The country above the Ghauts was tranquil; all apprehension from French efforts to disturb it had subsided; and Colonel Wellesley had ample leisure to turn his attention chiefly to the civil administration of the extensive province over which he had been placed.

While so doing he assisted in carrying into effect a proposed survey of the territories recently ceded to the company and the Rajah, and also in permanently settling the annuities granted to those persons who had been pensioned after the fall of Seringapatam.

Probably among the most distinguishing traits of the Duke of Wellington's character, the facility with which, through life, he directed his mental energies to efforts of the most opposite description, will be found the most remarkable. The hand that wields the sword, can seldom use the pen with much success. The best soldiers have proved but sorry scribes; and actions, brilliantly achieved, have been but badly detailed by those who have performed them. That Colonel Wellesley, in his military correspondence, was perspicuous and intelligible, his own despatches prove; but that a young and ardent soldier could turn his attention to monetary arrangements, and those, too, of a complicated character, which to a European must have been very embarrassing, is still more wonderful.

In the May of 1800, Colonel Wellesley received a letter from the Governor-General, offering to unite him with Admiral Rainier, in the command of an expedition destined against the island of Batavia. The reasons which induced Lord Mornington to offer, and Colonel Wellesley to decline the command, were alike honourable to both. The Governor-General thus expresses himself:

"The king has given me the power of selecting the persons who are to conduct this expedition; and I have thought it, on every ground, most expedient to place the principal conduct of the equipment and negotiation in the hands of Admiral Rainier. It will be necessary to join a military officer in the commission with him; and a conscientious sense of duty induces me to think, that you are the most fit person to be selected for that service, provided you can safely be spared from Mysore for the period of the expedition, which I imagine may be four or five months, but probably cannot be longer.

"In proposing this service to you, justice requires that I should state to you its contingent advantages. I have every reason to believe that the warehouses at Batavia contain public property to a very large amount. This will necessarily fall to the Crown; and in the instructions for the expedition to Surinam, the whole property of the same description was reserved expressly for his majesty's pleasure, no part of it being granted to the captors by the tenor of those instructions. The instructions, however, are so expressed, as to admit little doubt that the king's intention was ultimately to grant a proportion, at least, to the captors, of the public property at Surinam. My instructions, with relation to this point, will be precisely the same as those given in England with respect to Surinam; and I therefore conclude, that the expedition will be very advantageous to the naval and military commanders."

Lord Mornington further continues:

"Having thus stated the whole of this case to you, without reserve, I desire you to make your option, upon your own view of the question; with this single reservation, that I am persuaded you will be aware of the necessity of postponing any decision upon it, until you have ascertained that Lord Clive can substitute in your present command, during your absence, a person completely satisfactory to him in every respect. For this purpose I request you to write privately to Lord Clive, and to act according to his wishes."

Colonel Wellesley accordingly communicated to Lord Clive the offer of the Batavian command which had been made him by his brother. His lordship, who had generally disapproved of the projected expedition, conveyed to the Governor-General an ardent entreaty that the colonel should decline the contemplated appointment, and continue in his command of the

Mysore. The marquess thus communicated the request to his brother :

"FORT WILLIAM, *June 6th*, 1800.

"MY DEAR ARTHUR,

"Lord Clive has pressed for your continuance in Mysore with an earnestness so honourable to you, that I think you cannot accept of the command of the forces destined for Batavia ; indeed, I suspect that you could not quit Mysore at present. Your conduct there has secured your character and advancement, for the remainder of your life ; and you may trust me for making the best use of your merits in your future promotion."

That the Batavian expedition was a service much to be desired by Colonel Wellesley, may be readily imagined. The plan had emanated from the king himself ; and the capture of a very valuable colony would necessarily render a command as profitable as it was honourable. But in the aspect of political affairs there was much to cause alarm ; for the increasing strength of Dhoondiah Waugh, and growing disaffection of the Polygars, became every day more notorious. These circumstances at once decided Colonel Wellesley in his choice. The contest lay between interest and duty ; and, with a high-minded soldier, the election was easily made, and as afterwards the Governor-General abandoned the intended expedition against Batavia, and turned his entire attention to effect a powerful diversion on the coasts of the Red Sea, he pressed the colonel to accept a command under General Baird, to whom, in right of seniority, the expedition had been very properly confided. The following extract is from a letter dated March 3rd, addressed by the Marquess Wellesley to his brother :

"General Baird will bring you several letters from me, which will serve to explain my motives for wishing you to retain the second command of this expedition. I am persuaded that a full consideration of the question will induce you to agree with me in opinion, that the extent of the force to be employed rendered it necessary to appoint a general officer to the chief command ; while the sudden call to active service, precluded the possibility of removing you from the second command without injuring your character, or of leaving you officially the power of option, without reproach upon the impartiality and justice of my administration. You will, however, exercise your judgment

upon the propriety of desiring leave to return to Mysore ; and if you should retain your anxiety on that subject, I shall not attempt to obstruct your wishes, nor shall I feel any sentiment of unkindness upon the transaction ; but my decided opinion is, that you will best satisfy the call of your public duty, and maintain the reputation of your public spirit, by serving cheerfully and zealously in your present situation."

The request of the Governor-General was cheerfully acceded to—Colonel Wellesley at once consented to take a command under General Baird. But it was fated that he should not accompany Baird to Egypt.

On April 3rd, just as every arrangement was complete, he was seized with a return of intermitting fever, which had previously attacked him at Trincomalee. His anxiety to embark was with difficulty refrained by the injunctions of Mr. Scott, the surgeon. He had resolved to go, and to that determination he adhered until the last moment, thinking, as he said, that the voyage would be of service to him, and that he should be completely recovered long before the expedition reached Mocha.

"But these expectations were, unfortunately, not realised in the sequel ; and, on April 5th, the day which General Baird had fixed for the embarkation, Colonel Wellesley was pronounced incapable of proceeding."

Colonel Wellesley's recovery was tedious. The fever, as it frequently does in the East, occasioned a painful eruption ; and, consequently, all idea of his being able to follow the army, which had proceeded on its destination, was abandoned. Lord Mornington, finding his brother's services rendered unavailable by bad health, restored him to his government in the Mysore ; and the General Order that notified his appointment conveyed the thanks of the Governor-General to the meritorious officer who had held the intermediate command.

"FORT ST. GEORGE, *April 20th*, 1801.

"The Governor in Council takes this opportunity of expressing his lordship's high sense and approbation of the conduct of Colonel Stevenson, in the command of the forces in Mysore, during the absence of the Hon. Colonel Wellesley ; and the eminent success which has attended the operations entrusted to that officer in Malabar, having entitled him to the distinguished mark of his lordship's approbation, the Governor in Council has resolved to appoint Colonel Stevenson to the special com-

mand of the provinces of Malabar and Canara, under the orders of the officer commanding in Mysore."

On resuming his command, Colonel Wellesley applied himself assiduously to the duties of his government. The rigid justice with which he caused native rights to be respected, had obtained the confidence of the people during his former administration at Mysore ; and, from the spirit of his own despatches, it would appear that this firm impartiality had in no way been relaxed on his return. In his government, no distinction of caste or colour warped him in his decisions, or aggravated or extenuated an offence, and the humblest Hindu, if aggrieved, had but to complain, and have his injuries redressed.

It is said, that Colonel Wellesley painfully regretted the untoward event which prevented him from accompanying the Egyptian expedition. When he did, the page of destiny was closed ; and he little dreamed of that brilliant career which lay immediately before him. The tranquillity of the East was overclouded again : a formidable hostility to British interests, had been gaining strength among the Marhattas ; and India was once more hurrying to the customary termination of Oriental diplomacy—an appeal to the sword.

A letter was received by Major-General Wellesley notifying that operations in the Marhatta country were likely to occur ; and the general applied himself, with his usual zeal, to effect the necessary preparations.

The opening of the campaign devolved on him. He had been directed to advance on Poonah, in concert with the subsidiary force of the Deccan, commanded by Colonel Stevenson, to drive Holkar from the capital, and secure the return of the Peshwah. Accordingly he commenced his march from Hurryhur on March 9th, and crossed the Toombuddra river on the 12th. The progress of the British troops through the Marhatta territories was most successful. They were everywhere received as friends, and almost all the chiefs, in the vicinity of the route of the detachment, joined with their forces, and accompanied the British army to Poonah. The amicable conduct of the jaghiredars and of the inhabitants contributed to enable our army to perform this long march, at a most unfavourable season of the year, without loss or distress.

Anticipating the issue of this Marhatta confederacy, the Marquess Wellesley appointed Lord Lake to the command of the army of Hindustan ; and his lordship, with General Wellesley, was invested with the fullest authority, military

and political. No time was lost by the latter in exercising his discretionary powers. He demanded at once that Scindiah should retire behind the Nerbudda, and separate his army from that of the Rajah of Berar, undertaking that the British and native troops should immediately retire from the field, and resume their ordinary cantonments.

With the usual duplicity of Eastern princes, the demand of explanation was received with specious excuses and the customary delay that attends the proceedings of Oriental diplomacy. The object was easily seen through—time was wanted to mature their plans, and confederate others who were unfriendly to the British interests. General Wellesley at once penetrated their designs, and determined to render them unavailing. Having waited the result of the negotiation then in progress at the camp near Walkee, on the first intelligence of Colonel Collins having quitted Scindiah's camp, the general put the army into motion, and directed his march upon the ancient city of Ahmednuggur.

"The Fort of Ahmednuggur is one of the strongest in India, built of solid stone and chunam, surrounded by a deep dry ditch, with large circular bastions at short intervals, and armed with three or four guns in casemated embrasures, with a terrace above and loop-holes for musketry. The bastions are unusually lofty, the curtains short and low, with loop-holes in the narrow ramparts for musketry. The guns (some sixty pieces) upon the bastions were numerous, ranging in their calibre from twelves to fifty-twos; but the casemates were too confined to allow their being effectively employed. The glacis was so abrupt as to cover nearly thirty feet of the walls, affording shelter for an enemy if they could only get close to the place."

On the 10th, General Wellesley commenced firing on the fort, and the Killedar proposed to treat for its surrender, requesting, that while terms were under consideration, the battery should cease. The British General acceded to the former part of his request; but the cannonade never slackened, except for the short time necessary to permit the guns to cool. On the next morning, the Killedar sent out his vakeels; terms were made; and, on the 11th, the garrison marched out, and the fort was occupied by a detachment of the British army. The conquest was one of much importance. Ahmednuggur secured the communications with Poonah, and, from its central situation, became a most useful depot. In another view its

possession was desirable, it being the capital of a fertile district, which produced a considerable revenue.

An official order, by the Governor-General, dated September 8th, from Fort William, conveyed to the commanding officer and troops engaged in the reduction of the fortress, a flattering testimonial both as regarded the value of the conquest, and the daring gallantry with which it was achieved.

When apprised that Ahmednuggur had fallen, Scindiah and the Rajah of Berar put their immense armies into motion, while Wellesley advanced towards the Godavery, and reached Toka on August 21st. Here, the English general had decided upon crossing the river immediately below the junction of two of its most considerable streams. After a tedious and dangerous operation, which lasted from the 21st to the 28th, the passage was effected ; a few men, with several horses and bullocks, having been swept down the stream and drowned.

The enemy having encamped at Boherdun, at the distance of two marches, it was determined that a combined attack should be made upon their forces without delay ; and General Wellesley held a conference with Colonel Stevenson for this purpose on September 21st.

It was arranged that the attack should be made on the 24th, the armies advancing in two divisions, to avoid the delay that must otherwise occur, by moving, *en masse*, through a narrow and difficult defile. Accordingly, on the 22nd, Colonel Stevenson marched by the western route, while General Wellesley took an easterly direction, following the more direct road which leads round the hills between Budnapoor and Jalna.

On the 23rd, the major-general arrived at Naulniah ; and the hircarrahs announced, that the confederated chiefs had retired with the whole of their cavalry that morning, leaving their infantry to follow, who were, however, still encamped at the distance of two leagues. This intelligence—which afterwards proved untrue—induced Wellesley to attack the enemy without delay.

Leaving his baggage with a rear-guard, reinforced by the 1st battalion of the 2nd regiment, under Lieutenant-Colonel Chalmers, and having despatched messengers to hurry the movements of Colonel Stevenson, he resumed his operations—and at noon he found himself, after a severe march, most unexpectedly in front of the entire of the Marhatta armies.

The position of the allied chiefs extended from Boherdun to the village of Assye, having the Kaitna in their front, and

from the steepness of its banks, that river was impassable to carriages, except at the fords of Peepulgaon and Warson. Nothing could be more picturesque than the appearance of the Marhatta camp—nothing more imposing than the multitudinous force drawn up in order of battle. "The sight was enough to appal the stoutest heart. Thirty thousand horse in one magnificent mass crowded the right; a dense array of infantry, powerfully supported by artillery, formed the centre and left; the gunners were beside their pieces, and a hundred pieces of cannon in front of the line stood ready to vomit forth death upon the assailants. Wellesley paused for a moment, impressed but not daunted by the sight; his whole force, as Colonel Stevenson had not come up, did not exceed eight thousand men, of whom sixteen hundred were cavalry; the effective native British were not above fifteen hundred; and he had only seventeen pieces of cannon."

As the British cavalry came up, they formed line on the heights, and presented a strange but glorious contrast to the countless multitude of Marhatta horsemen, who were seen in endless array below. The English brigade, scarcely numbering sixteen hundred sabres, took its position with all the boldness of a body having an equal force opposed; although in number Scindiah's cavalry were fully ten to one.

The columns having arrived, Wellesley changed his original intention of attacking the enemy's right, and determined to fall upon the left, which was composed entirely of infantry. The ground on which these battalions were drawn up was a flat peninsula of inconsiderable size, formed by the union of the waters of the Kaitna with the Juah. The space was too confined to allow room for the Marhatta cavalry to operate to much advantage, "while the defeat of the corps of infantry was most likely to be effectual." Accordingly, a lateral movement was made to the left,—the march of the column being covered on the right flank by the Mysore horse, and in the rear protected by the British cavalry, under Colonel Maxwell.

Having crossed the ford of Peepulgaon, which the enemy had neglected to defend, the British infantry were formed in two lines, supported by the cavalry, which were placed in line in reserve in the rear, on an open space between the Kaitna, and a nullah that ran in a parallel direction with its stream. While deploying, the Marhatta guns kept up a furious cannonade; but undisturbed by a fire that was ably directed and

well sustained, the British dispositions for attack were coolly and promptly completed.

"The order of battle being thus skilfully changed, the infantry of Scindiah was compelled to present a new front. They did so with greater ease than was expected. The line they now formed reached with its right up to the Kaitna, and its left upon the village of Assye, on the Juah. The front now presented by the enemy was one vast battery, especially towards the left, so numerous and weighty were the guns, and so thickly were they disposed immediately near the village. The fire was rapid, furious, and terrible in execution; the British guns, few in number, opened as the line advanced, but were almost on the instant silenced. Their gunners dropped fast, and the cattle fell killed or lacerated beside them. With the fierceness of the struggle, and the fearfulness of the hazard, the undaunted spirit of the general rose. He at once abandoned the guns, and directed an advance with the bayonet: with the main body, he soon forced, and drove the enemy's right, possessing himself of their guns by a resolute charge."

The pickets, with the 74th as a supporting regiment, were on the right of the two lines of infantry, and their attack was distinguished equally by the gallantry it exhibited and the loss it produced. With unquestioned bravery, but bad judgment, the officer commanding, when he might have covered his men in a great degree by a circuitous movement, pushed forward directly against the village of Assye, thus of necessity crossing "a space swept like a glacis by the cannon of the enemy." Overwhelmed by a murderous fire the gallant band left half its number on the field. The men fell by dozens—and one company of those forming the pickets was almost annihilated. It went into action with an officer and fifty men; and in the evening four rank and file were all that survived that bloody day.

No wonder that the line under this tremendous fusillade from the village, supported by continuous showers of grape, was in many places fairly cut through, and that with difficulty it still maintained its ground. Perceiving its disorder, a cloud of Marhatta horsemen stole round the enclosures of Assye unperceived, and charged furiously into ranks already half destroyed. The moment was most critical. The Mussulman sabres were crossing the bayonets of the 74th, and "feeble and few, but fearless still," that gallant regiment was desperately resisting. Colonel Maxwell, who had watched the progress

of the fight, saw that the moment for action had arrived. The word was given,—the British cavalry charged home. Down went the Marhattas in hundreds, beneath the fiery assault of the brave 19th, and their gallant supporters the sepoys; while, unchecked by a tremendous storm of grape and musketry, Maxwell pressed his advantage, and cut through Scindiah's left. The 74th and the light infantry rallied, re-formed, pushed boldly on, and, the second line coming forward to their support, completed the disorder of the enemy, and prevented any effective attempt to renew a battle, the doubtful result of which was thus in a few minutes decided by the promptitude of that well-directed charge.

Some of Scindiah's troops fought bravely. The desperate obstinacy with which his gunners stood to the cannon, was almost incredible. They remained to the last—and were bayoneted around the guns, which they refused, even in certain defeat, to abandon.

The British charge was resistless; but in the enthusiasm of success, at times there is a lack of prudence. The sepoys rushed wildly on—their elated ardour was uncontrollable—while a mass of the Marhatta horse were arrayed on the hill ready to rush upon ranks disordered by their own success.

But General Wellesley had foreseen and guarded against the evil consequences a too excited courage might produce. The 78th were kept in hand; and supported by a regiment of native horse, they were now led forward by the general in person. The guns on the left were carried, and the village stormed with the bayonet. In this short but sanguinary attack, the 78th were highly distinguished. Their loss, from the severity of the enemy's fire, was severe, and General Wellesley had a horse killed under him.

A strong column of the enemy, that had been only partially engaged, now rallied and renewed the battle, joined by a number of Scindiah's gunners and infantry, who had flung themselves as dead upon the ground, and thus escaped the sabres of the British cavalry. Maxwell's brigade, who had re-formed their ranks and breathed their horses, dashed into the still disordered ranks of these half-rallied troops—a desperate slaughter ensued; the Marhattas were totally routed; but the British cavalry lost their chivalrous leader, and in the moment of victory, Maxwell died in front of the battle, pressing on the pursuit of a mingled mob of all arms, who were flying in disorder from the field.

The rout was now complete. The sun at noon had shone on a proud array of fifty thousand men, drawn up in perfect order—he set upon a broken host, flying in dispersed bodies from a field, on which the whole *matériel* of an army remained abandoned. Under more desperate circumstances a battle was never fought; and, opposed by overwhelming masses, a victory was never more completely won. Everything at noon was against the conquerors—numbers, position, all that could render victory almost a certain event, lay with the Marhatta chieftains. Small as the British force was, its energies were weakened by a long and exhausting march beneath a sultry sky; and nothing but indomitable courage could have sustained Wellesley's feeble battalions against the mighty masses to which they were opposed. Assye was indeed a glorious triumph—"It was a magnificent display of skill, moral courage, and perfect discipline, against native bravery, and enormous physical superiority." Nor were Scindiah's troops a body of men, rudely collected, ignorant of military tactics, and unused to combinations. In every arm the Marhatta army was respectable; and the facility with which they changed their front in the morning, proved that the instructions of their French officers had not been given in vain.

The loss of the Marhattas could never be correctly ascertained; but it was computed, that they left two thousand dead upon the field, and that their wounded exceeded thrice that number. Several standards, and nearly the whole of their artillery fell into the hands of the conquerors; and when they halted twelve miles from the scene of their defeat, they had no cannon, and scarcely any ammunition, the tumbrils having been deserted or blown up. On the first intelligence that Colonel Stevenson (who reached the field of battle next morning) was advancing in force, the routed divisions fled precipitately down the Ghauts, and easily evaded a pursuit, which the feebleness of the victors, and their own immense superiority in cavalry, rendered unavailing.

Among the many distinguished or promising officers who fell in this brilliant but sanguinary action, Colonel Maxwell of the 19th Dragoons was particularly regretted. He had shown excellent judgment in the command of the cavalry, throughout a very doubtful day—and in the last charge, died gloriously, sword in hand, at the head of his gallant regiment.

The death of an officer of inferior rank, Captain Mackay, of the 4th Native Cavalry, occasioned a very general sympathy; and

as the detail is highly honourable to Major-General Wellesley, and in a very striking light "points the moral" of his earlier character, we shall, with a prefatory explanation, give it in the words of Colonel Welsh.

Captain Mackay was on the staff, his charge a commissary one, and consequently he was neither expected nor permitted to engage in regimental duty. Popular with his own corps, "brave to a fault," kind to his inferiors, and unassuming with his equals, he made a great military mistake, in exhibiting a proud and unbending spirit to those whose superior rank commanded from him a professional deference. It would appear that with Major-General Wellesley he was no favourite; and indeed, though possessing every redeeming quality besides, that one unfortunate failing could not but occasion annoyances to those in command, and entail still more frequent humiliations on himself.

"On the eve of the battle, Mackay wrote to Captain Barclay, the adjutant-general, requesting the general's permission to join his corps upon the march and in action. To this request he got a positive refusal, and was told he could not be spared from his own department, he being in charge of the public cattle of the army. He offered to resign; and was told he could not be spared at that moment. On which he wrote, that 'whenever he should find his corps going into action, he would, at all hazards, join it: that he knew he should thereby forfeit his commission, but he trusted, if he did lose it, it would be with honour.' On the receipt of this hasty and ill-advised letter, the general is said to have exclaimed, 'What can we do with such a fellow, Barclay? I believe we must e'en let him go;'—and go he certainly did, heading the charge of his own regiment, and in line with the leading squadron of the noble veteran 19th Dragoons; and he fell, man and horse, close to one of the enemy's guns, pierced through by several grape shot. When in the very heat of the action, news was brought to the general that Captain Mackay was killed, his countenance changed, and a tear which fell upon his cheek, was nature's involuntary homage to the memory of a kindred spirit."

When the last of the enemy had disappeared, such of the cavalry as were fit for duty, were sent back to Nulliah by moonlight, to bring up the camp equipage and baggage. This partial detachment, with the immense proportion of the little army, rendered in the action *hors de combat*, reduced Major-General Wellesley's force to a mere handful; and the field of

Assye, from which fifty thousand combatants had been driven at sunset, was held during the succeeding night, by a force not exceeding fourteen hundred men !

The victory of Assye was followed up by General Wellesley with his customary activity. Colonel Stevenson was detached to harass the ruins of Scindiah's army, and afterwards reduce the fortresses of Burhampoor and Asseerghur. The general himself was prevented moving from the neighbourhood of his victory, as the greatest difficulty was experienced in obtaining means of transport for his wounded ; and no consideration could induce him to "leave his brave fellows exposed in an open town." While, to use his own phrase, "tied by the heels," from being obliged to send all his doolies to the fort of Adjuntee with the wounded, every day brought intelligence which proved how decisive the defeat at Assye had been.

The position in which General Wellesley was placed, embarrassed him no little in deciding what future movements should be adopted. In a despatch, dated October 8th, he describes in clear but brief terms the reasons which prevented him from marching northward, and obliged him to entrust to Colonel Stevenson the reduction of the fort of Burhampoor.

"Scindiah and the Rajah of Berar, after making two marches to the westward along the Taptee, have turned to the southward, and, it is said, intend to pass the Casserbarry Ghaut. They have with them the greatest part of their horse, some infantry, and some guns, which they got out of Burhampoor. They have sent into that place the remains of the Campoos.

"It is possible that this movement may be intended to draw my attention away from Burhampoor and Asseerghur ; and they may return to the northward upon finding that I do not follow them. On the other hand, these things called allied governments are in such a state of deplorable weakness, they depend so entirely on us for the defence of their own territories, and their power is so feeble over their own servants, who have so much connection with and even dependence on the enemy, that I have not means to move forward at once upon Asseerghur with my whole force, although I know that if I could take that step with safety, it would put an end to the war.

"I have therefore determined to return to the southward, and to send Colonel Stevenson to Burhampoor."

Colonel Stevenson's operations were attended with complete success, and the objects at which General Wellesley aimed, fully

accomplished. "On October 16th, the colonel took possession of Burhampoor without opposition ; marched to Asseerghur on the 17th ; took possession of the Pettah on the 18th ; opened a battery against the fort on the 20th ; and obtained possession of it on the morning of the 21st."

And yet it was a strange position in which General Wellesley found himself, one of great embarrassment, and involving a serious responsibility. Every step he took required the deepest consideration—his operations were defensive or aggressive, as circumstances varied ; and, while with one wing of his little army he reduced the strongholds of the enemy, he was obliged, with the other, to secure an extensive frontier, penetrable on every point, and with no resisting means beside his own, on which for a moment he dare place dependence. In writing officially to Major Shawe, he thus describes his singular position : "Since the battle of Assye, I have been like a man who fights with one hand, and defends himself with the other. With Colonel Stevenson's corps I have acted offensively, and have taken Asseerghur ; and with my own, I have covered his operations, and defended the territories of the Nizam and the Peshwah. In doing this, I have made some terrible marches, but I have been remarkably fortunate ; first in stopping the enemy when they intended to press to the southward, through the Casserbarry Ghaut ; and afterwards, by a rapid march to the northward, in stopping Scindiah, when he was moving to interrupt Colonel Stevenson's operations against Asseerghur ; in which he would otherwise have undoubtedly succeeded."

Convinced, however, from the best sources through which he gleaned his information, that a great desertion had taken place in Scindiah's cavalry, and that this, added to the ruin of his infantry at Assye, would prevent any dangerous movement by that chief, watched closely as he was by Colonel Stevenson's division, General Wellesley found himself at last authorised in recommencing active operations ; and accordingly he turned his attention to the Rajah of Berar, who had moved to the southward on a predatory expedition. On October 25th,—for with Wellesley, to plan and to execute were simultaneous,—he broke up his camp. "The *générale* was beaten at half-past four, the assembly at half-past five, and the march immediately commenced."

Nothing can be more picturesque than a military movement on an extended scale, over a country possessing those rich and striking features for which India is remarkable. The *coup d'œil*

is grand and scenic—as lost in jungle or ravine, and again displayed in glorious sunshine,

> Troop after troop are disappearing,
> Troop after troop their banners rearing,

until the whole of "battle's magnificent array" covers some mighty plain with crowds of men and animals which in numbers appear interminable. The march of a European army, imposing as it is, conveys but a faint idea of the gorgeous effect an Oriental one produces. A flood of crimson blends with the varied colouring of native costume, and the Highland tartan is contrasted with the flowered caftans of the horsemen of Mysore. All is on a scale of magnificence. The field equipage, the park, the commissariat, appear to a European eye enormous—while animals without number, from the stately elephant to the graceful Arab, add to the splendid effect this mighty pageant exhibits.

The admirable judgment which Major-General Wellesley evinced in the vigorous but cautious system of warfare he adopted, produced the results he had anticipated. The immense numerical forces of the Marhatta chieftains became daily more difficult to keep together, when forced back upon their own frontiers, and obliged to seek those supplies at home, that hitherto they had acquired by marauding on their neighbours. After some weeks' marching and counter-marching, Scindiah, disgusted with a war in which no plunder was to be obtained, and of which the burden, as well as danger, fell entirely on his own dominions, made proposals for peace, and despatched a vakeel to General Wellesley. On his arrival on November 8th, in the vicinity of the British camp, the envoy was received with suitable respect, and a scene of Oriental formality ensued, which Lieutenant-Colonel Welsh notices in his reminiscences.

"Having passed at a canter to the Marhatta lines on our left, and there meeting the vakeel, who with his friends had dismounted to receive the general, we all alighted, when a *gullehmillow*, or hugging scene, commenced among the great folks, which lasted some minutes ; after which the ambassador and General Wellesley again mounted, followed by the rest, and the cavalcade returned by torch-light to head-quarters, where the band of his majesty's 78th Regiment and a company were drawn up, who saluted the vakeel as he dismounted. The general's tent, a large square single-poled one of about thirty feet, although half the officers had retired, could hardly contain the

genteel crowd which remained. Taking a particular interest in the scene, I contrived to get close to the general's chair. He first handed the vakeel in, and seated him on his right hand, and Gocklah, our head ally, on his left, and so on with the rest, according to their rank. A silver salver with betel was then brought in, which the general distributed to all the seven natives on his right and left entitled to such a compliment. He then gave them rich dresses and shawls, and lastly, presented the vakeel in particular with two superb jewels, and a rich gold chain, which were immediately fastened round his turban, and several more beautiful shawls and dresses were added to that donation; during which time the band of the 78th played 'God save the King.' The great men conversed on common topics, till the last present, when the vakeel told General Wellesley, in very good Hindoostanee, that 'the Maharajah, his master, wished for nothing so ardently as his friendship and amity;' and rising to take leave, was conducted to the door by the general. As a great concourse had assembled at the entrance, it was with difficulty the guard could make way for a very large elephant and beautiful horse to be brought up, and presented to the vakeel, who, mounted on a superb white charger, most richly caparisoned, galloped off in great style, followed by his presents and escort;—and thus ended the visit."

The mission of Scindiah's vakeel, in consequence of his not being properly accredited by his master, was protracted from November 8th to the 22nd; and then terminated in an armistice, from which the Rajah of Berar was excluded. Whatever objects the Marhatta chief might have had in view by obtaining a cessation of hostilities, it was decidedly politic in General Wellesley to effect it if he could; for thus he would sever the confederacy, and be placed in a position to crush his enemies in detail. He was well aware of the insincerity of his opponent; and never doubted but that the armistice was designed by Scindiah to serve an end, and that its conditions would be observed or violated just as interest should require.

On forwarding to Colonel Stevenson the conditions attached to the armistice, the major-general directed that Scindiah, if moving to the eastward of Ellichpoor, should pass unmolested; but should he march westward, the colonel was authorised to attack him.

But Scindiah, who had never designed to carry into effect that condition in the armistice which obliged him to retire his army forty miles east of Ellichpoor, was encamped at Sersooly,

in direct communication with Manoo Bappoo, then commanding the forces of his brother, the Rajah of Berar. On the 28th Colonel Stevenson judiciously halted at Huttee Andorah, to enable Wellesley to come up; and on the 29th, both corps united at the village of Parterley.

But Scindiah had already moved off, and from the distance they had gained, and the fatigue his troops had undergone, General Wellesley despaired of overtaking them, and determined to halt and encamp till evening; but the circumstances detailed in his despatch, brought on an action that placed another laurel on his brow, and annihilated Scindiah's power.

The annexed letter, addressed to the Governor-General, contains the official account of this triumph of discipline and courage over numbers:

"Colonel Stevenson's division and mine both marched to this place yesterday, the colonel having with great prudence and propriety halted on the 28th at Huttee Andorah, to enable me to co-operate in the attack on the enemy. We found on our arrival that the armies of both chiefs had decamped: and from a tower in Parterley, I could perceive a confused mass, about two miles beyond Sersooly and Scindiah's old camp, which I concluded to be their armies in march.

"The troops had marched a great distance on a very hot day, and I therefore did not think it proper to pursue them; but shortly after our arrival here, bodies of horse appeared in our front, with which the Mysore cavalry skirmished during a part of the day; and when I went out to push forward the pickets of the infantry to support the Mysore cavalry, and to take up the ground of our encampment, I could perceive distinctly a long line of infantry, cavalry, and artillery, regularly drawn up on the plains of Argaum, immediately in front of that village, and about six miles from this place, at which I intended to encamp.

"Although late in the day, I immediately determined to attack this army. Accordingly I marched on in one column, the British cavalry leading in a direction nearly parallel to that of the enemy's line; covering the rear and left by the Mogul and Mysore cavalry.

"The enemy's infantry and guns were on the left of their centre, with a body of cavalry on their left. Scindiah's army, consisting of one very heavy body of cavalry, was on the right, having on its right a body of pindarries and other light troops. Their line extended above five miles, having in their rear the

village and extensive gardens and enclosures of Argaum ; and in their front a plain, which, however, was much cut up by watercourses, etc.

"I formed the army in two lines ; the infantry in the first, the cavalry in the second, and supporting the right ; and the Mogul and Mysore cavalry the left, nearly parallel to that of the enemy ; with the right rather advanced in order to press upon the enemy's left. Some little time elapsed before the lines could be formed, owing to a part of the infantry of my division which led the column having got into some confusion. When formed, the whole advanced in the greatest order ; the 74th and 78th Regiments were attacked by a large body (supposed to be Persians), and all these were destroyed. Scindiah's cavalry charged the 1st Battalion, 6th Regiment, which was on the left of our line, and were repulsed ; and their whole line retired in disorder before our troops, leaving in our hands thirty-eight pieces of cannon and all their ammunition.

"The British cavalry then pursued them for several miles, destroyed great numbers, and took many elephants and camels, and much baggage. The Mogul and Mysore cavalry also pursued the fugitives, and did them great mischief. Some of the latter are still following them ; and I have sent out this morning all of the Mysore, Mogul, and Marhatta cavalry, in order to secure as many advantages from this victory as can be gained, and complete the enemy's confusion.

"The action did not commence till late in the day, and, unfortunately, sufficient daylight did not remain to do all that I could have wished ; but the cavalry continued their pursuit by moonlight, and all the troops were under arms till a late hour in the night."

The triumph of Major-General Wellesley over the army of Dowlut Rao Scindiah, was not only a brilliant martial achievement, but an event that led to the most important political results. No victory was less expected ; for the cessation of hostilities which had been arranged between the Marhatta chief and British general, led to a natural belief that operations on both sides were terminated for a season, and that the armistice was but the forerunner of a peace. None, it would appear, had learned the extent of his brother's success with more surprise and more satisfaction than the Governor-General ; and the following extract from a letter acknowledging his receipt of the despatch, contains the Marquess Wellesley's sentiments regarding the importance of this well-timed and valuable conquest :

"I received this morning your despatch of November 30th, from Parterley, with the account of your signal and most seasonable victory of Argaum. Although I entirely approved your armistice, and thought it a most judicious measure, I confess that I prefer your victory to your armistice; and I think your last battle must have removed every obstacle to peace, and facilitated every accommodation which can tend to enlarge the channels of amicable intercourse."

Scindiah's submission followed, he agreeing to cede to the English, in perpetual sovereignty, all his forts, territories, and rights in the Dooab, or country situated in northern Hindustan, between the rivers Ganges and Jumna. Secondly, to cede to the English, in perpetual sovereignty, the fort and territory of Baroach, in the Gujerat, and the fort and territory of Ahmednuggur, in the Deccan, and likewise all the territories which belonged to him before the commencement of the war, which are situated to the southward of the Adjuntee Hills in the Deccan, including all the districts between that range of mountains and the river Godavery. Thirdly, to renounce for ever all claims upon the Emperor Shah Allum, and to engage never again to interfere in the affairs of that monarch. And, lastly, to engage never to take or retain in his service any Frenchman, or the subject of any European or American power, the Government of which might be at war with the British Government, or any British subject, whether European or Indian, without the consent of the British Government.

The treaty was ratified by Scindiah on January 5th, 1804, and approved and perfected by the Governor-General, on February 13th at Calcutta.

The unbounded exultation evinced by all classes throughout India, when the short but brilliant campaign of General Wellesley terminated in the overthrow and submission of the Marhatta potentates, can scarcely be imagined. In every settlement and town, the inhabitants testified their feelings and sentiments by public rejoicings, "and their pleasure was mingled and heightened with an admiration of those sagacious counsels, comprehensive views, and energetic measures, which, in the short space of five months, had discomfited the armies of the confederates, conquered many of their most valuable provinces, and obtained the rational triumph of a secure and glorious peace."

An address, signed by all the principal inhabitants of Calcutta, was presented to the Governor-General, on Feb-

ruary 29th, expressing their entire concurrence in the justice and necessity of the war—their admiration of the manner in which it was planned, as well as of the heroic energy with which it was conducted ; and their approbation of that enlarged, but moderate system of policy, on the principles of which, the general peace of Hindustan was established. And when intelligence of the success of the Indian armies reached England, the thanks of Parliament were voted to the Governor-General, and to the commanders, officers, and soldiers who had shared in the glory of the contest.

General Wellesley had for some time expressed an anxious wish to retire from his command in the Mysore. He had many causes of complaint—he was disliked by the Peshwah—his measures were sometimes rendered inoperative by restrictions of the Government—and occasional notices in his despatches, show that he felt these annoyances. Whether from these causes, or that "he was prompted to return to Europe by that hidden law which so often makes the temporary vexations of men, selected by Providence for special purposes, the means of turning them into their appointed theatre, he felt the influence of that mysterious yearning, which, even in the midst of honours and power, prompts the destined actors in great events to pant for higher glories."

When it was officially announced that General Wellesley had determined to return to England, addresses were voted by numerous public bodies ; and a magnificent vase was presented to him by the commanding officers and heads of departments, attached to the army of the Deccan. This costly present was accompanied by the following address :

"The officers who served with the division of the army under your immediate command in the Deccan are desirous of presenting you with a pledge of their respect and esteem ; and to express the high idea they possess of the gallantry and enterprise that so eminently distinguish you, they request your acceptance of a golden vase of the value of 2,000 guineas, on which it is proposed to record the principal event that was decisive of the campaign in the Deccan.

"In conveying to you this mark of their esteem, they sincerely add their wishes for your future welfare and prosperity ; and their hopes that when the public claims on your talents allow you repose, this vase may give pleasure to your social habits, in bringing to your remembrance events that add so much to your renown."

Among other testimonials of esteem, none was more affectionate than one presented to General Wellesley by the native inhabitants of Seringapatam ; as in the simple language of the East, it breathed the most ardent prayers to "the God of all castes and colours" for his future prosperity and glory.

On March 10th, General Wellesley embarked for England on board the *Trident* man-of-war, having notified in a general order to the troops his resignation of the command in the Deccan, and immediate departure from India.

To family influence Wellington's earlier success has been mainly attributed ; and none will deny that the patronage of his gifted brother, first opened to the young soldier that arduous path, which ultimately led to fame and fortune. But who shall assert that the outbreakings of a master mind were not discernible, from the first moment when he received an independent command ; and that in an affair which was little more than the destruction of a brigand, the same system of quick but cautious movement—the seizure of momentary advantage in attack, were not as clearly demonstrated in the suppression of the robber horde, as when he defeated his scientific opponent at Salamanca, or, by beautiful combinations, achieved his triumph at Vittoria ? To compare events like these may appear preposterous ; but let it be remembered, that intuitive ability and military tact, may be as fully exhibited in bringing off a picket when endangered, as in conducting the retreat of a division.

In Wellesley's earlier successes, two circumstances connected with them, strike us as being most remarkable—the enormous masses of organised men over whom his triumphs were achieved, and the scanty means with which these brilliant victories were effected. Small as the latter were, in examining the proportionate strength of his armies, his British soldiers did not exceed a fourth of the whole ; and with native troops—Mussulman opposed to Mussulman—Scindiah was routed at Assye, and Gawilghur, esteemed hitherto impregnable, carried by assault. Nothing can afford a stronger proof of that moral effect which superior intelligence exercises over uncultivated qualities in producing their development. Commanded entirely by British officers, the Indian army, in efficiency, was scarcely second to any. In the field, the Sepoy soldier emulated his European associates in gallantry and discipline ; and in the camp he far exceeded them in sobriety and general good conduct. In danger, the Hindu exhibited a calm resolution, which no reverses could overturn—his fidelity was unbounded—his loyalty not

to be shaken—want and suffering could never induce him to desert his officers—and death alone detached him from those colours, which, whether in victory or defeat, he regarded with a devotion that bordered on idolatry. His character united opposites ; for with a disposition embued with the mildness of a woman, he combined the indomitable courage of a hero. Many instances could be adduced to show that in some of the best requisites of a soldier, "the Indian auxiliary might serve as a model to every service in Europe ;" and that when circumstances required it, he was willing to seal his loyalty with his life, and abandon everything but his faith.

In the record of an Indian siege, it is stated, that "on one occasion, when the provisions of a garrison were very low, and a surrender in consequence appeared unavoidable, the Hindu soldiers entreated their commander to allow them to boil their rice, the only food left for the whole garrison. 'Your English soldiers,' said they, 'can eat from our hands, though we cannot eat from theirs ; we will allow them as their share every grain of the rice, and subsist ourselves by drinking the water in which it has been boiled.'"

A still more striking trait of the deep affection a Hindu soldier feels for his European comrade is recorded. When the remnant of Baillie's army were delivered up by that truculent monster, Tippoo Sultaun, they were marched across the country to Madras, a distance of four hundred miles. "During the march, the utmost pains were taken by Tippoo's guards to keep the Hindoo privates separate from their European officers, in the hope that their fidelity might yet sink under the hardships to which they were exposed, but in vain ; and not only did they all remain true to their colours, but swam the tanks and rivers by which they were separated from the officers during the night, bringing them all they could save from their little pittance ; "for we," they said, "can live on anything, but you require beef and mutton."

We have but lightly sketched the earlier career of Wellesley in the East, and shown that in India those germinations first appeared, which afterwards produced a rich and glorious harvest. With him the opening promises of celebrity were amply realised hereafter—the workings of the master mind were readily discerned—and in his first exploits, there is a brightness of conception, a boldness in execution, that warrants the fullest comparison in martial daring, between the conqueror of Lodi and the victor of Assye.

CHAPTER III

IMMEDIATELY on his return to England, Major-General Wellesley was appointed to a staff command. The British Government, previous to his arrival from the East, had determined to effect a diversion on the Continent, and an expedition had been accordingly prepared, and placed under the command of Lord Cathcart. It sailed on November 4th from the Downs, under the temporary orders of General Don. Lord Cathcart assumed the command on the 17th, but the disastrous consequences which resulted from the defeat of Austerlitz, rendered it advisable to abandon the attempt, and the troops were accordingly recalled to England. On the return of the expedition from Hanover, Major-General Wellesley was appointed to command the troops stationed at Hastings, in Sussex ; to his new duties he applied himself with assiduity—and the fine order and superior discipline of his brigade, showed how contentedly, after commanding an army in the field, he turned his attention to the humbler services his country had now required from him.

The Marquess Cornwallis, who succeeded the Marquess Wellesley in the government of India, held it but a short time, dying on October 5th, 1805, at Ghazypoor, near Benares. By his demise, the colonelcy of the 33rd Regiment became vacant, and Major-General Wellesley succeeded the marquess, having been lieutenant-colonel of that corps for nearly thirteen years.

Shortly before he obtained his regiment, the major-general was returned to Parliament for the borough of Rye. On April 10th, 1806, he married Catharine, third daughter of Edward Michael, second Earl of Longford. Two sons were the issue of this marriage,—Arthur, Marquess of Douro, born February 3rd, 1807, in Harley Street, London ; and Charles, born at the Chief Secretary's lodge, near Dublin, January 16th, 1808. Both entered the Army at an early age, and both have attained the rank of lieutenant-colonel.

In 1807, when the Portland administration came into power, the Duke of Bedford was removed from the Irish lieutenancy, and the Duke of Richmond appointed his successor. The important situation of Chief Secretary having been offered to Sir Arthur Wellesley, he accepted it conditionally, "that it should not impede nor interfere with his military promotion or pursuits"—and repairing immediately to Dublin Castle, he

undertook the duties of his laborious and responsible appointment. Many of his old friends, with whom he had been intimate before he quitted Ireland for the East, hailed his return with delight. The same unassuming carriage, the same facility of approach, was then as characteristic of the successful general, as it had been of the young aide-de-camp in 1792, then the *attaché* of a Court, and one who had only "heard of battles." "He was in all material traits still Sir Arthur Wellesley, but it was Sir Arthur Wellesley judiciously improved."

In the spring of 1807, an expedition, which has been reprobated for its injustice by one party, and praised for its salutary results by another, was directed to be got in readiness with all possible despatch. Its operations were intended against the Danish capital, and its object was to obtain a temporary possession of a formidable fleet, then lying in the basins of Copenhagen.

Denmark had hitherto preserved a perfect neutrality,—her weakness and locality required it,—and Great Britain had tacitly acquiesced in permitting this feeble state to rest in safety, amidst the convulsion of all around, only requiring from the Crown Prince an assurance, that a strict impartiality should be maintained towards all the belligerents. Notwithstanding her acknowledged neutrality, Murat crossed her frontier most unceremoniously in pursuit of a Prussian corps under Blucher, and in an affair that resulted between the advanced posts of the French and Danish armies, some lives were lost. A very trifling explanation from Murat satisfied the Crown Prince,—the insult was overlooked,—and it was whispered that the Danish Government might possibly submit to French aggression even on a greater scale. The chief source of apprehension was the navy,—and the facility with which Denmark submitted to Napoleon's decree against British commerce, induced many to believe, that a demand of the possession of her fleet and dockyards, might be acceded to without any very serious opposition. Other circumstances made the neutrality of Denmark rather questionable. The Crown Prince was particularly anxious to retain his Continental possessions, and these lay completely at the mercy of Napoleon. A French party was strong about his Court—and the Emperor's threat, it was supposed, had not been forgotten by this dependent sovereign,—"Let that little prince take care, or I shall teach him how to act."

The treaty of Tilsit occasioned in England additional appre-

hension. It was determined that the navy of Denmark should not be added to the enormous resources of Napoleon, and with immense despatch and profound secrecy, the means were completed for obtaining its possession. A powerful fleet, accompanied by an army of 20,000 men, were got ready for service; the former commanded by Admiral Gambier, the latter by Lord Cathcart. The objects of the expedition were kept so secret that the greater portion of the armament was at sea, before its destination was suspected. On August 4th, the fleet anchored between the Castle of Cronenberg and the capital; and on the 12th, the German legion joined from Pomerania.

Negotiation was unsuccessfully tried; and on the 15th Mr. Jackson, the British *chargé d'affairs*, announced that any accommodation which might remove the causes of England's suspicion, was hopeless. The army was consequently landed between Elsineur and Copenhagen on the 16th, and the fleet brought closer to the city.

The army advanced in three columns, slightly annoyed by the fire of the Danish gun-boats, and by detached parties of troops, who were, however, repelled wherever they attempted to attack. On the 19th, the post of Fredericksverk was surprised, and its garrison of eight hundred and fifty men made prisoners—and on the 24th, the right wing invested the city, and commenced erecting mortar batteries for its bombardment.

The Danes had, in the meantime, been collecting their regular troops and militia under General Carstenkiold, and he had been reinforced with four regiments commanded by General Ozhoken. It became necessary that this force should be dispersed, and General Wellesley, with Generals Linsengen and Stuart, and a corps of sufficient strength, was detached by Lord Cathcart to effect this service.

Immediately after the dispersion of the Danish corps, the major-general proceeded into the interior to overawe in the country any attempt which might be made to excite a popular rising. In this service he succeeded, and was recalled to assist at the capitulation of the city.

The siege was now vigorously pressed—and the works, unchecked in their progress by the feeble resistance made by the musketry of the city, and the fire upon the praams and gun-boats, were completed. After summoning the garrison, on the evening of the 2nd, the batteries and bomb vessels

opened, and the town was speedily in flames. On the night of the 3rd, the fire slackened, to allow General Peyman an opportunity to capitulate—but the Danish governor was obstinate, and on the evening of the 4th, the bombardment recommenced more furiously than ever. On the 5th, the place was everywhere wrapped in flames, and the destruction of the town appeared inevitable. The white flag was then displayed; and after a short delay an armistice was concluded. The great object of the expedition was thus obtained, for the fleet and naval stores were yielded to the conquerors.

The loss sustained by the British was comparatively trifling. Of the land forces, two hundred were rendered *hors de combat*, while the casualties of the navy scarcely exceeded fifty. The fine fleet and immense quantity of naval stores contained in the dockyards at Copenhagen, would have afforded Napoleon ample means for effecting his threatened descent upon the coasts of England or Ireland. Sixteen sail of the line, nine frigates, fourteen sloops, and many smaller vessels, were brought away. The ships were laden with masts, spars, and cordage; besides which ninety transports were filled with naval stores; and of five vessels on the stocks, two were taken to pieces and brought to England, and the remainder destroyed. On the 13th, according to treaty, the embarkation of the troops commenced; on the 18th it was completed; and on the 20th, the last English guard in the citadel was relieved by a Danish detachment, and the fleet and army quitted the shores of Zealand.

With the exception of some trifling casualties, the Danish fleet reached the British ports in safety; and the cause of a great national alarm was happily removed. That the service had been ably executed, all parties in the State agreed; that sound policy—that which rests on self-protection—required that Denmark should be deprived of the means of endangering Great Britain, was conceded. All admitted that Napoleon would have applied the naval resources of the Crown Prince against his island enemy without scruple; but it was contended, that England had imitated too closely the military philosophy of France, in which the leading principle inculcated that the end sanctified the means.

To devote a city to that horrible visitation to which Copenhagen was subjected, was certainly a fearful alternative; and could the Danish navy have been obtained by lesser violence, its seizure would never have caused half the reprobation that it did,

But assuredly, if the British commanders were to blame, the Danish executive were infinitely more culpable. For their stupid obstinacy there is no plea ; for from blindly refusing to capitulate, nothing but domestic calamity could spring. There can be but one sentiment as to the imprudence and inhumanity of the Crown Prince, in permitting his troops to offer a hopeless resistance to the British arms, by which a crowded capital was exposed to all the horrors of a bombardment. To sanction this resistance, was as wanton in point of cruelty, as it was unnecessary in point of honour ; especially as he did not participate in the danger himself. The destruction of houses and property, and the waste of the blood of his subjects, were not required to prove to the world the repugnance with which his fleet was surrendered, or the detestation with which he regarded the whole transaction. It would have been better manifested by a declaration of war against Great Britain, accompanied by a detail of the circumstances that produced it.

The manner in which the business of Sir Arthur Wellesley's department was carried on, appeared to have given universal satisfaction. A contemporary, in alluding to his accepting office a second time, after the expedition to Copenhagen, makes this remark : "On his return, he recommenced his duty of secretary ; and during his residence in Ireland in that capacity, I did not hear one complaint against any part of his conduct, either as a public or private man."

But the time had now arrived when the hero of Assye was required to serve his country in a sphere more suited to his talents A considerable force had been collected at Cork in the spring of 1808 ; and public conjecture assigned it very opposite destinations. The general belief was that it was destined to act against the Spanish possessions in South America, and such was the original intention. Fortunately, another and more glorious scene of action was its destiny. Lieutenant-General Wellesley was selected for its command ; and a letter from Lord Castlereagh explained the objects generally, which Government had in view in sending, or holding in readiness, all their disposable troops in Britain, for service in the Peninsula.

"DOWNING STREET, *June* 30th, 1808.

"SIR

"The occupation of Spain and Portugal by the troops of France, and the entire usurpation of their respective Governments by that power, has determined his majesty to direct a corps

of his troops, as stated in the margin, to be prepared for service, to be employed under your orders, in counteracting the designs of the enemy, and in affording to the Spanish and Portuguese nations every possible aid in throwing off the yoke of France.

"As the deputies from the above provinces do not desire the employment of any corps of his majesty's troops in that quarter of Spain, from whence they are immediately delegated, but have rather pressed, as calculated to operate a powerful diversion in their favour, the importance of directing the efforts of the British troops to the expedition of the enemy from Portugal, that the insurrection against the French may thereby become general throughout that kingdom, as well as Spain, it is, therefore, deemed expedient that your attention should be immediately directed to that object.

"The difficulty of returning to the northward with a fleet of transports, at this season of the year, renders it expedient that you should, in the first instance, proceed with the armament under your orders off Cape Finisterre. You will, yourself, precede them in a fast-sailing frigate to Corunna, where you will have the best means of learning the actual state of things, both in Spain and Portugal; and of judging how far the corps, under your immediate orders, either separately, or reinforced by Major-General Spencer's corps, can be considered as of sufficient strength to undertake an operation against the Tagus.

"If you should be of opinion, from the information you may receive, that the enterprise in question cannot be undertaken without waiting for reinforcements from home, you will communicate, confidentially, to the provisional Government of Galicia, that it is material to the interests of the common cause, that your armament should be enabled to take an anchorage to the northward of the Tagus, till it can be supported by a further force from home; and you will make arrangements with them for having permission to proceed with it to Vigo, where it is conceived it can remain with not less security than in the harbour of Ferrol, and from which it can proceed to the southward with more facility than from the latter port.

"You are authorised to give the most distinct assurances to the Spanish and Portuguese people, that his majesty, in sending a force to their assistance, has no other object in view than to afford them the most unqualified and disinterested

support ; and in any arrangements that you may be called upon to make with either nation, in the prosecution of the common cause, you will act with the utmost liberality and confidence, and upon the principle that his majesty's endeavours are to be directed to aid the people of Spain and Portugal, in restoring and maintaining, against France, the independence and integrity of their respective monarchies.

"In the rapid succession in which events must be expected to follow each other, situated as Spain and Portugal now are, much must be left to your judgment and decision on the spot.

"His majesty is graciously pleased to confide to you the fullest discretion to act according to circumstances, for the benefit of his service, and you may rely on your measures being favourably interpreted, and receiving the most cordial support.

"The entire and absolute evacuation of the Peninsula, by the troops of France, being, after what has lately passed, the only security for Spanish independence, and the only basis upon which the Spanish nation should be prevailed upon to treat, or lay down their arms.

"I have the honour to, etc. etc,

"Castlereagh."

"Lieutenant-General Sir Arthur Wellesley, K.B."

With his accustomed promptitude Lieutenant-General Wellesley prepared for an immediate departure. His new appointment was more germane to his feelings, than wasting the summer of his youth in the dull details of official correspondence. In writing to Major-General Hill, he says, "I rejoice extremely at the prospect I have before me of serving again with you, and I hope we shall have more to do than we had on the last occasion, on which we were together.

"I propose to leave town for Cork, as soon as I shall receive my instructions from London. . . . Pray let me hear from you, and acquaint me with all your wants, and whether I can do anything for you here. You will readily believe that I have plenty to do, in closing a Government in such a manner as that I may give it up, and taking the command of a corps for service ; but I shall not fail to attend to whatever you may write to me."

On reaching Cork Sir Arthur Wellesley was delayed a few days waiting for transports, the 20th Light Dragoons, and horses for the artillery. On the evening of the 9th the embarkation

was completed, but contrary winds prevented it from leaving the harbour. On the 12th, however, the whole got under weigh, and on the 13th were clear of the Irish land. Here, in obedience to orders previously received, Sir Arthur Wellesley parted company with the fleet, and leaving the *Donegal*, in which vessel he had embarked, sailed direct in the *Crocodile* frigate for Corunna, where he arrived on the 20th, and according to his instructions from Lord Castlereagh, he put himself into immediate communication with the Junta of Galicia.

CHAPTER IV

"THE late war in the Peninsula will be memorable above all of modern times. It was no common war, of which a breach of treaty, an extension of frontier, a distant colony, or a disputed succession, serves as the cause or pretext. . . . It was for the life or death of national independence, national spirit, and of all those holy feelings which are comprehended in the love of our native land."

Napoleon Buonaparte, "the scourge and wonder of an age," had raised a mighty empire on the ruins of a republic,—his power and glory were at their zenith,—the movements of his armies were but a march to victory,—half Europe was at his feet, and thrones and kings rose and fell at his dictation. With one solitary exception, all cowered before the magic of his name; and while her political horizon became every hour more heavily overcast, Great Britain maintained, with inflexible resolution, the attitude she had from the first assumed;—and though every banner beside her own, veiled its glories before the victorious eagles of the Corsican, the leopards of England were seen waving proudly

Far as the breeze could bear, or billows foam.

What Louis XIV. had dreamed, Napoleon had actually effected. "The Austrian Netherlands, and all the German states as far as the Rhine, were annexed to France, and the European powers who were most injured and endangered by this usurpation, acquiesced in it with hopeless submission. Beyond the Rhine the French were in possession of many strong places, which gave them access into the heart of Germany. Buonaparte was king of Italy, as well as Emperor of France. One of his brothers

had been made King of Holland, a second King of Naples, and a third King of Westphalia, all in immediate dependence upon him as the head and founder of the Napoleon dynasty."

It seemed that Europe had ceased to have the wish or the power to oppose his views; and men began to speculate as to what new designs the inordinate ambition of the soldier-king should be directed. Would he subjugate Turkey; partition it and Greece among his satellites; and thus, safe from the thunders of a British fleet, secure a passage into Egypt, and eventually reach the heart of Hindustan? But the part of Charlemagne, and not that of Alexander, was to be enacted by the French Emperor. Spain and Portugal were the objects at which he aimed—one was corrupt, the other helpless—both he believed almost within his grasp—and in idea, he was already master of the Spanish Indies and Brazil.

As a preliminary step towards the execution of his grand scheme for the subjugation of the Peninsula, Spain was duped into a secret treaty with France, by which Portugal was to be partitioned, and the *élite* of the Spanish army, amounting to sixteen thousand men, under the Marquess Romana and General Gonzalo O'Ferral, placed at the disposal of Napoleon, and drafted to the north of Germany. The next step was to obtain military possession of Portugal, and, if possible, secure the persons of the Braganza family. To found a pretext for these iniquitous acts, the French and Spanish ambassadors communicated to the Court of Lisbon Napoleon's demands, to which Portugal was desired to submit. Her ports must be closed against England—any subjects of that power resident in the country were to be arrested,—all English property confiscated; —and these stipulations were to be acceded to within three weeks, or war with both powers denounced as the alternative.

But short as was the time allowed the Portuguese Court for taking these demands into consideration, Napoleon did not await its expiration. All Portuguese vessels in his harbours were seized, and an army of 25,000 infantry, with 3,000 cavalry, was ordered to march directly on Lisbon, to be joined on the frontier by a Spanish corps. Junot, a favourite aide-de-camp of Napoleon, to whom the occupation of the devoted kingdom had been entrusted, moved immediately from Salamanca. In a few days he reached Alcantara, and by forced marches was within ninety miles of Lisbon, before the authorities in that city were apprised that the enemy had crossed the Spanish frontier.

A little rest at Alcantara was indispensable, and from that

city Junot issued his first proclamation to the Portuguese nation, —a document founded on fraud and falsehood, and whose professions were violated before the printing of the manifesto was dry.

It is unnecessary to state anything more, than that the invaders approached the capital by forced marches ; that the Royal Family, aware of this fact by the *Moniteur*, threw themselves into the arms of England for protection and emigrated to the Brazils, while Junot took possession of the capital.

But the French were scarcely rested in Lisbon before the true character of the invaders displayed itself. Nightly, and without beat of drum, reinforcements poured in—and they were quartered in such parts of the capital as were best calculated to overawe the citizens, and secure a safe communication between the troops. The great convents were converted into barracks, their former occupants having been unceremoniously ejected, while the houses of the *noblesse* and the wealthier of the merchants were taken from their owners, and occupied by the general officers and their staffs.

The effect of French oppression was soon apparent ; trade and industry altogether ceased, and a kind of national despondency pervaded every class. The merchant abandoned himself to despair, and the peasant refused to till the ground. Suicide, a crime unfrequent among the Portuguese, occurred daily in the city—while fields unsown, and vineyards running wild, told that the peasant had become as reckless as the trader.

And meanwhile, Napoleon's plans were quietly but secretly maturing ; whilst bewildered by their family disputes, the wretched Bourbons never appeared to notice Napoleon's corps as they gradually overspread the kingdom, and by finesse or bribery obtained possession of every stronghold in Spain.

At last the weak old king, terrified at the ruin that impended, formed the sudden resolution of retiring from a scene of endless inquietude and intrigue, to end his days, like the Emperor of the Brazils, in South America. Accordingly, his abdication was publicly notified on the 20th, at Madrid ; and Ferdinand was proclamed king, to the great joy of the Spanish nation.

But the succession to the throne was not to be so easily effected,—Murat, with Moncey's corps and a splendid body of cavalry, crossed the Somosierra—while Dupont passed the Duero, and occupied Segovia, the Escurial, and Aranjuez.

On March 24th Ferdinand made his public entry. He was received by the populace with acclamations ; but Murat at

once refused his recognition. In vain the imbecile monarch endeavoured to propitiate the haughty Frenchman. In vain, on a slight intimation that the present would be acceptable to Napoleon, the sword of Francis I. was at once surrendered, after remaining as a national trophy in the Armoria Real since the battle of Pavia. Murat and Beauharnois remained inflexible, waiting, as they said, directions from the Emperor. In the meantime, to add to Ferdinand's embarrassments, Charles, with singular inconsistency, recalled his Act of Abdication, declaring that it was wrung from him by intimidation.

But the French Emperor could never have indulged the hope, that the infatuated family of Spain were about to consummate their ruin by a voluntary act. Ferdinand appointed a Junta, having his uncle Don Antonio at its head, and Murat a member, and then set out for France. Deaf to all remonstrance, he proceeded on his journey, and reached Bayonne on April 20th. His father, who had resumed the crown, followed the example of his son ; and, accompanied by his consort, and prime minister, Godoy, he too crossed the frontier, and "threw himself, his cause, and kingdom, into the hands of the Emperor."

Napoleon now determined to carry into effect his dearly cherished project of placing a member of his own family upon the throne of Spain, which he had rendered vacant by his intrigues. Lucien Buonaparte was accordingly named as the successor of the line of Bourbon, but with singular firmness and sound judgment he at once declined the offered elevation. No one differed more widely in politics and pursuits from another than the Prince of Canino from the Emperor. Possessed of a princely revenue, embued deeply with Republican principles, and averse to the turmoil of State intrigue, Lucien indulged in classic ease, and preferred epic poetry and domestic quiet to becoming a king in name, and in reality the creature of a despot. True, that despot was a brother ; but Lucien was perfectly aware that the same overweening spirit which, during the consulate, had driven him from his councils, would now require him to be a puppet in his hands, to work the will of one to whom free agency was criminal.

Though mortified at the refusal of his overtures, Napoleon had determined that a member of his family should fill the throne of Spain. His next choice, therefore, fell upon his brother Joseph, who was reigning, not without some popularity, at Naples, over a kingdom which had long been grievously

misgoverned, and which had submitted in fair war to the right of conquest. He, too, by Lucien's earnest advice, declined the odious elevation ; but while he pursued his journey to Bayonne, whither he had been summoned, intending to persist in his refusal, the Emperor, who would take no denial from him, proceeded in his arrangements, well knowing that he would submit to that ascendency which so few were capable of resisting.

When the intentions of Napoleon respecting the succession to the throne were communicated to the executive at Madrid, they were received with a servile acquiescence, that in these authorities was disgraceful in the extreme. The Junta, the Council of Castile, and the municipality, all sent in their adhesion. The primate of Spain, Cardinal Bourbon, although cousin of Charles IV., in a letter remarkable for its fawning subserviency, also tendered his allegiance to the usurper. To complete the farce, a convocation of such of the Spanish *noblesse* as could be persuaded to attend, was holden at Bayonne, and Joseph was in form invited to the throne, and a new constitution prepared. Ninety-one grandees and men of influence assisted at these proceedings, and the name assumed by them was "The Assembly of Notables." Nothing could surpass the meanness of their adulation when addressing both the Emperor and the new-made king ; and accustomed as Napoleon was to listen to the grossest flattery, the oratory of the President Aranza was overpowering. For the first, and perhaps the only time in his public life, Buonaparte was at a loss for a reply. "He spoke, indeed, more than three-quarters of an hour, but it was vaguely and hesitatingly, in confused and broken sentences, his head bending down ; and when he raised it at times, it was only again to let it fall. None of those memorable expressions came from him which hearers bear away ; none of those sparkling sentiments and pointed sentences—those coruscations which at other times characterised his discourse."

Immediately after the ceremonies had terminated at Bayonne, Joseph crossed the frontier, and proceeded towards Madrid, while Napoleon returned to the French capital. In every town through which the Emperor passed, he was received with the warmest enthusiasm ; and never had the French people hailed his return with more fervour after his most brilliant victories, than when he repaired to Paris after effecting the usurpation of the Spanish throne.

From Tolosa and Vittoria Joseph issued proclamations,

intended to amuse the Spaniards, and tranquillise the disturbances which had broken out. But the die was cast, and the hollow professions of the intruder were drowned in the war-cry of the nation. Every post on his route was protected by a French garrison ; and the strength of his escort proved how little he trusted to the false assurances of those around him, who would have persuaded him that his brother's choice could ever become pleasing to the nation. After passing Breviesca and Burgos, he entered the capital on the 20th—and on the 24th, with all due formalities, he was proclaimed King of Spain and the Indies.

It was, however, a heartless and ill-omened ceremonial. Excepting the French soldiery, and *attachés* of the new Government, "none cried, God bless him." But a few houses were decorated in honour of the occasion, and to the direct interference of the authorities, these equivocal tokens of respect were to be entirely attributed. "The money which was scattered among the populace lay in the streets where it fell for the French themselves to pick up ; and the theatres, which were thrown open to the people, were left to be filled by Frenchmen."

While the pageant of Joseph's inauguration was enacting in the capital, the provinces were hurrying to arms. In Catalonia, Valencia, and Andalusia, "war to the knife" was about to be proclaimed ; and the Asturias, Galicia, and Estremadura, had already risen. Little did Napoleon foresee the fatal results his ill-advised usurpation of the crown of the Bourbons should occasion—little did he imagine when he tauntingly remarked, "that Spain had some fifteen thousand soldiers left, and some old blockhead to command them," that what he considered as a reaction unworthy of a care, should be fostered into life, and in its consequences ultimately involve the downfall of his house. Such, however, was the case; and from the moment he attempted to establish Joseph on the throne, with claims resting upon "the consent of an imbecile monarch, and the weakness of a few pusillanimous nobles, in contempt of the millions now arming to oppose him," every step he took upon the ladder of ambition, to use the remarkable words of Talleyrand, was downwards !

Britain, at this juncture, had been appealed to, and delegates from the Asturias had visited London, and received an enthusiastic welcome. Not only from the Government, but from the nation at large, did the representatives of a distressed people experience a generous and most encouraging sympathy. Subscriptions were opened in most of the large towns in the

kingdom, from which considerable sums were realised, and applied to the service of the patriots. All the Spanish prisoners taken during the late war were set at liberty ; and being armed, clothed, and equipped, they were transported to their native shores, that they might assist in the great work of liberating their country. Nor did the efforts of Great Britain end there ; large quantities of muskets, cannon, balls, powder, and other military stores, were conveyed to different parts of the Peninsula, for the purpose of arming a population which professed to stand in need of arms only to ensure success ; whilst the admirals on the station, as well as the Governor of Gibraltar, received orders to communicate with the Spanish authorities as often as need be, and to lend every assistance which the latter might require, or the former might be able to afford.

Immediately after his interview with the Galician deputies, Sir Arthur Wellesley, who had received ample instructions from the Government at home, proceeded to Oporto, where the Supreme Junta of Portugal were collected. He was cordially received by the bishop ; and to his demands for supplies of cattle for the purpose of draught and the consumption of the army about to disembark, he received a willing compliance. When, however, Sir Arthur offered to land at Oporto, and march with the patriots collected there at once upon the capital, his plan of operations was overruled, and a landing nearer Lisbon recommended by both the Junta and their generals.

In addition to the arms and ammunition landed on the coast, and dispersed among the peasantry, the Galician Junta had been supplied with £200,000 in specie ; and the following proclamation, signed by the British commanders, was extensively circulated through the country.

"People of Portugal.

"The time is arrived to rescue your country, and restore the government of your lawful prince.

"His Britannic Majesty, our most gracious king and master, has, in compliance with the wishes and ardent supplications for succour from all parts of Portugal, sent to your aid a British army, directed to co-operate with his fleet already on your coast.

"The English soldiers who land upon your shore, do so with every sentiment of friendship, faith, and honour.

"The glorious struggle in which you are engaged is for all that is dear to man—the protection of your wives and children ;

the restoration of your lawful prince; the independence, nay, the very existence of your kingdom; and for the preservation of your holy religion. Objects like these can only be obtained by distinguished examples of fortitude and constancy.

"The noble struggle against the tyranny and usurpation of France will be jointly maintained by Portugal, Spain, and England; and in contributing to the success of a cause so just and glorious, the views of his Britannic Majesty are the same as those by which you are yourselves animated.

"LAVROS, *August 2nd*, 1808."

Immediately on landing, a conference was held by Sir Arthur Wellesley, at Montemor Velho, with Bernardim Freire, who then commanded the Portuguese army, and plans for future operations were proposed and discussed. Freire was particularly anxious that the armies should unite, march into Beira, and there open the campaign: while the English general prudently refused to give up his communication with the coast, and trust to the uncertain chances of supplies which the country might afford. A movement on Leyria, which was represented as being largely stored with provisions, was next proposed, and agreed to; and on the 9th, the British advanced guard, composed of four companies of the 60th and 95th Rifles, supported by the brigades of Hill and Ferguson, quitted the Mondego, and early next day the main body followed.

It was soon ascertained by Sir Arthur Wellesley that no reliance could be placed on the promises of Freire, and that very slight advantages were likely to result from the insurrectionary movements in the provinces. The patriots were well-disposed, but they were to be armed and organised to render them efficient; while the regular troops were required to be fed. Instead of finding supplies in Leyria for his own army, the Portuguese leader, having first seized on the magazines, demanded that Sir Arthur Wellesley should subsist the native troops. Disgusted with this early display of bad faith in a partisan, from whom an ardent co-operation might have been expected, the English general peremptorily refused to accede to this unreasonable request, and addressed to Freire the following letter:

CALVARIO, *August 13th*, 1808.

"SIR,

"Lieutenant-Colonel Trant informed me this morning of the distress which your troops were likely to suffer from want of

bread, and he earnestly urged me, on the part of your Excellency, to issue bread to the Portuguese troops from the British commissariat.

"I beg leave to call to your Excellency's recollection, what I have repeatedly told you, that it was not in my power to supply the Portuguese troops with bread; and, in fact, when your Excellency shall reflect upon my situation in this country, the distant prospect that Portugal will, in any reasonable time, be able to supply the wants of bread by the British troops; the distance at which we are placed from Great Britain, from whence we must draw our supplies of bread, under these circumstances; and above all, that I have not made any previous arrangements to answer so extraordinary a demand on the part of your Excellency; you will, I am convinced, do me justice to believe, that in declining to comply with your wishes, upon this occasion, I have been actuated solely by an attention to those circumstances attending our situation at the present moment, which are most likely to have a fatal influence on the success of the service in which we are both employed.

"I beg leave to recall to your Excellency's recollection, what I told you at Oporto, that I could only supply bread to the British troops, that I repeated this to you at Montemor Velho, and I apprised you in both these conferences that I should require wine and meat for my soldiers, and straw and corn for the horses and cattle attached to the army.

"I moved forward in great haste, and at great inconvenience to the army, in order to save the depôt formed at Leyria, as I understand, for the use of the British troops. But when I arrived there, having learned from the Portuguese commissary, that if he delivered the bread to my troops, there would be none for those under the command of your Excellency, I declined to ask for it, and actually received nothing at Leyria excepting wine for one day."

If the English general found himself loaded with embarrassments, the French commandant, to use a figurative phrase, was not upon a bed of roses. The news that a British army had effected a landing in Mondego Bay reached Lisbon on the 2nd. Junot's position was fraught with danger, while his force, too small to coerce a rebellious people, was divided, and at a distance. Setuval, and the posts south of the Tagus, were threatened by the insurgents, who were in force at Alcacer do Sal. The capital was prepared to revolt. Every means were used to excite "the hatred and the hopes of the multitude;"

and while it was absolutely necessary that the forward movement of the invaders should be arrested, it appeared an act little short of madness, to weaken the garrison of Lisbon, when an insurrection might be momentarily expected.

Junot, however, had come to a determination of taking the field in person, leaving the capital in charge of General Travot, with a garrison of seven thousand men. On the 15th, the same day on which Sir Arthur Wellesley's light troops entered Caldas, Junot moved from Lisbon with the whole of his reserve, consisting of two thousand infantry, six hundred cavalry, and ten guns, taking with him also his military chest and spare ammunition. Circumstances delayed his march ; at Saccavem the ferry-boat had been removed by the peasantry, and he lost an entire day in throwing a bridge across the creek ; and when on his route to Otta, a report that the English had landed in the neighbourhood of Lisbon, induced him to retrace his steps to Villa Franca, which place he reached before he had discovered that the alarm was groundless. Leaving the reserve under the direction of Thiebault, Junot proceeded direct to Alcoentre, and there assumed the command of Loison's corps.

Sir Arthur Wellesley, in the meantime, had pushed forward to attack Laborde ; and he thus details the opening movements, which brought, for the first time, under fire those matchless soldiers, whom afterwards he so often led to victory.

"CALDAS, *August 16th*, 1808.

"I marched from Leyria on the 13th, and arrived at Alcobaca on the 14th, which place the enemy had abandoned in the preceding night ; and I arrived here yesterday. The enemy, about 4,000 in number, were posted about ten miles from hence, at Rolica ; and they occupied Obidos, about three miles from hence, with their advanced posts. As the possession of this last village was important to our future operations, I determined to occupy it ; and as soon as the British infantry arrived upon the ground, I directed that it might be occupied by a detachment, consisting of four companies of riflemen, of the 60th and 95th Regiments.

"The enemy, consisting of a small picket of infantry and a few cavalry, made a trifling resistance, and retired ; but they were followed by a detachment of our riflemen to the distance of three miles from Obidos. The riflemen were there attacked by a superior body of the enemy, who attempted to cut them off from the main body of the detachment to which they belonged,

which had now advanced to their support; larger bodies of the enemy appeared on both the flanks of the detachments, and it was with difficulty that Major-General Spencer, who had gone out to Obidos when he heard that the riflemen had advanced in pursuit of the enemy, was enabled to effect their retreat to that village. They have since remained in possession of it, and the enemy have retired entirely from the neighbourhood."

The French general was placed in a situation that required no small display of personal intrepidity, and a sound discretion to direct it. Loison was distant from him a full march, and Thiebault still further removed from the chance of supporting him. To fight would expose him to a conflict with an army of twice his force; and to retreat was fraught with dangerous results, although three lines were open by which he might retire. If he should retreat by Torres Vedras, his communication with Loison must be entirely cut off; should he march on Montachique, the lines of Torres Vedras would be exposed; and to fall back, and join Loison at Alcoentre, would open a direct route for the British army to march upon the capital. "Animated by the danger, encouraged by the local advantages of his position, and justly confident in his own talents, Laborde resolved to abide his enemy's assault;" and this bold determination was admirably followed up by the ability of his dispositions, and the obstinacy of his resistance.

Never was a sweeter spot chosen for the scene of a murderous combat, than that which the village of Rolica, and its surrounding landscape, presented at sunrise on August 17th. The place, with its adjacent hamlets, contained, as it was computed, a population of nearly three hundred families. The houses were neat and commodious, each surrounded by an enclosed garden, stocked with vines; while the country about the villages, studded thickly with olive grounds, ilex groves, and cork woods, exhibited all that rustic comfort, which marks a contented and industrious peasantry. Upon a tableland, immediately in front of Rolica, and overlooking the country for many miles, the French were strongly posted. Laborde had seized every advantage a position of immense strength naturally presented—while the Sierra afforded a succession of posts on which he might easily fall back. In his rear, the ridge of Zambugeira ran east and west for three-quarters of a mile, yielding a fine point on which to rally if driven from his first

line of defence. Beyond this, heights of amazing difficulty to force, stretched from the Tagus to the ocean ; while on the left, ridge after ridge rose in towering grandeur, and united with the Alpine height called the Sierra de Baragueda.

"All the arrangements for attack having been completed on the preceding evening, at dawn the British got under arms. A sweeter morning never broke ;—the mountain mists dispersed, the sun shone gloriously out, a thousand birds were singing, and myriads of wild-flowers shed their fragrance around. Nature seemed everywhere in quiet and repose—presenting a strange contrast to the roar of battle which immediately succeeded, and the booming of artillery, as, repeated by a thousand echoes, it reverberated among the lately peaceful hills."

There is no reminiscence of the Peninsula, which the soldier recalls with more pride, than the small but brilliant action of Rolica. It is true that the scale was limited, and that the mighty masses with which after battle-fields were crowded were wanting for effect ; but nothing could be more perfect than Wellesley's attack—nothing more scientific than Laborde's resistance. Other circumstances add to the interest of this gallant affair. It was the first trial of the Hero of Assye opposed to European troops ; and these also, troops that with no absurd pretension, had claimed the title of invincible.

The moral effect of the combat of Rolica was of immense importance. It was the dawning of a glorious day ; and its results were admirably calculated to confirm the wavering faith of doubtful allies, and remove the conviction of the French regarding their military superiority. It was a noble compliment paid by Napoleon to British infantry, when he observed, "that they never knew when they were beaten ;" and it was the happiest delusion under which a soldier ever laboured—in fancying himself unconquerable. That belief had been artfully cherished by Napoleon ; and to its prevalence among his soldiers, half his victories may be ascribed. But the trial at Rolica at once dispelled the dream ; and the French discovered in the island soldiers to whom they were opposed, men in everything their equals—and in unflinching gallantry their superiors infinitely.

While Rolica betrayed the fine properties of British soldiers to their enemies, it was not its least advantage, that it also confirmed the confidence of their leader in the troops on whom he depended for success. If the sharp affair at Obidos proved the gallantry, the advance upon Rolica displayed the high

discipline of Wellesley's little army. The following graphic sketch happily describes the opening movements of the 17th :

"As the distance between Caldas and Rolica falls not short of three leagues, the morning was considerably advanced before the troops arrived within musket-shot of the French outposts. Nothing could exceed the orderly and gallant style in which they traversed the intervening space. The day chanced to be remarkably fine, and the scenery through which the columns passed was varied and striking ; but they were by far the most striking feature in the whole panorama. Whenever any broken piece of ground, or other natural obstacle came in the way, the head of the column having passed it, would pause till the rear had recovered its order, and resumed its station ; and then the whole would press forward, with the same attention to distances, and the same orderly silence, which are usually preserved at a review. At last, however, the enemy's line became visible, and in a few minutes afterwards the skirmishers were engaged. The centre division now broke into columns of battalions ; that on the left pressed on with a quick pace, whilst the riflemen on the right drove in, with great gallantry and in rapid style, the tirailleurs opposed to them."

Laborde's first position soon became untenable—his rear was endangered ; and, without a moment's indecision, he fell farther back, and occupied the mountain passes. Nothing could be stronger than this second position. "The way by which the assailants had to ascend was up ravines, rather than paths, more practicable for goats than men ; so steep, that in many parts a slip of the foot would have been fatal ; in some parts overgrown with briers, and in others impeded by fragments of rock." Of these the centre was the most practicable ; and the 29th and 9th Regiments advanced to storm it, under the fire of the British guns ; while a cloud of skirmishers vanished among rocks and copse wood, connecting the advance of the different columns, and feeling or forcing their way through obstacles that a vigorous defence had rendered almost insurmountable. Gradually, the scene became more animated, as on each of the several points of attack, the assailants and the assailed became warmly engaged. The spattering fusillade of the light troops was lost in the rolling volleys of the columns, which, with the deeper boom of cannon, echoed loudly through the mountains. The hollow watercourses, by which the British had attacked, hid for a time the combatants from view—but the smoke wreathing over the ravines, showed by its density

the place where the work of death went fastest on. On the left, Laborde gradually lost ground ; but on the right, his exertions were redoubled, in the desperate hope that Loison might yet come up, and thus retrieve the fortune of the day. Here, of course, the struggle became bloodiest. While the flank movements of Trant and Ferguson had not yet proved themselves successful, the 9th and 29th Regiments forced their respective passes, and gained the plateau of the hill. They reached the summit out of breath, their ranks disordered, and their formation requiring a few minutes to correct. At that moment, a fine battalion of Laborde's came boldly forward, delivered a shattering volley, and broke through the centre of the British regiment. But the 29th were broken, not beaten —and the 9th came to their assistance. The officers discharged their duties nobly, and the men fought, and formed, and held their ground with desperate obstinacy, until Ferguson won the right flank of the position ; when, aware that the chance of support was hopeless, Laborde retreated in excellent order, covering the regressive movement of his battalions by repeated charges of his cavalry.

His last stand was made at Zambugeira. The British, now come up in force, rendered opposition unavailing, and falling back on the Quinta de Bugagliera, he united his beaten corps with the troops he had detached to look after Loison at Segura ; thence, abandoning his guns, he marched by the pass of Runa, and gained Montachique by a severe night march, leaving the line of Torres Vedras uncovered, and consequently, Lisbon open to the advance of the British army.

CHAPTER V

HAVING continued the pursuit as far as Villa Verde, on the road to Torres Vedras, Sir Arthur Wellesley halted, with the full intention of pressing the French retreat early next morning. The brilliant success of their first encounter with the enemy, had roused the ardour of the British soldiery to a pitch of enthusiasm, which bade fair to overcome every obstacle that might present itself ; and not a doubt existed that a rapid march would bring Sir Arthur to the capital, or, should Junot risk a battle, that a second victory would place Lisbon in the possession of the conquerors. But overnight a messenger arrived, and caused the orders issued for advancing to be recalled. In-

telligence was brought the English commander, that General Anstruther, with a brigade from England, and a fleet of store-ships, had anchored off Peniche ; and to secure the safe landing of the troops and stores, Sir Arthur moved on Lourinha, and next day continuing his march towards the coast, on the evening of the 19th took up a position beside the village of Vimeiro, having detached a brigade to cover the march of General Anstruther's reinforcement, which after immense difficulty, had been landed in the Bay of Maceira, and that too in the face of a very superior cavalry, who overspread the country around the position, and increased the dangers of disembarking. Another brigade, under General Acland, arrived on the 20th, and landed that night, increasing Sir Arthur Wellesley's force to sixteen thousand men and eighteen pieces of artillery.

Thus reinforced, the British general determined on active operations ; and orders were issued for an immediate advance towards Lisbon. From the most accurate information he could obtain, Junot's force might be reckoned at eighteen thousand men, of whom, when garrisons were deducted, fourteen thousand remained disposable. Expecting the arrival of both Sir Harry Burrard and Sir John Moore, Wellesley wrote to the former a detail of all that had occurred, and recommended that Sir John Moore, on arriving on the coast, should land in the Mondego, march instantly on Santarem, and thus protect the left of Sir Arthur's army, and interrupt the communication between Elvas and the capital. In that case, Junot had no alternative but to abandon Lisbon, and retreat on Almeida, or risk a battle with the British army advancing by the coast. In case of attack, Moore would have been perfectly secure ; for the positions in front of Santarem were easily defended ; while at Granada, three thousand Spaniards were stationed, and Freire, with five thousand Portuguese, was calmly watching the result, and, in perfect security, awaiting the issue of the contest, caring little apparently for which side victory should declare.

Very unfortunately, at this critical juncture the arrival of Sir Harry Burrard was announced ; and Sir Arthur Wellesley went on board the frigate in Maceira Roads to communicate with his senior officer. He detailed the past, explained his future views, and urged the immediate continuance of offensive operations. Nothing could be simpler—nothing more soldierly, than the plans he recommended. He proposed on the next morning to march to Mafra, and turn the French position at Torres Vedras. But, unhappily for England, a man had been sent out

to mar the masterly dispositions of his predecessor. A true disciple of the Fabian school, delay seemed the leading object to be gained. Moore, he argued, might be expected in a few days upon the coast; but he forgot that these few days would have brought Wellesley to Lisbon. He urged that the cavalry were weak, the artillery badly horsed, and the risk that should be incurred of losing supplies by moving from the coast. It was in vain that Sir Arthur pointed out, in reply to all these objections, the impossibility of remaining quiet; because if they did not advance to attack the enemy, the enemy would assuredly advance and attack them. It was in vain that he represented the great advantage which must arise from Sir John Moore landing in the Mondego, and cutting off Junot's retreat. Sir Harry was not to be convinced. He remained obdurate to every argument employed to induce him to adopt the offensive; and Wellesley returned to his camp, convinced "that the military incapacity of his superior officer would, while it paralysed early success, as it did that of Rolica, entail upon the expedition ulterior disaster and disgrace. It was otherwise decreed—and the decision of an enemy wreathed the laurel on Wellesley's brow, of which the timidity of a feeble-minded colleague would have robbed him."

While the clear and vigorous appeal of Sir Arthur had failed in rousing into action, one in whose mind "an inauspicious spirit of caution prevailed," Junot, to whom delay would have been as fatal as defeat, was preparing to strike the blow that Wellesley was so anxious to have anticipated. The French commander dare not remain inactive. He had scarcely provisions for a second day; and it was dreaded, that every courier who arrived from the capital, would bring the unwelcome news that Lisbon was in arms. To fight, and not to manœuvre, was the only game for one to whom less evil would result from an immediate repulse, than good could be gained by a tardy victory. Accordingly, on the same evening on which Sir Harry Burrard had countermanded the advance of the British, Junot quitted his position, and after a tedious night-march, over broken roads and mountain passes, by seven o'clock on the morning of the 21st halted within four miles of the English pickets. Here, Junot formed his columns for attack; and as the ground concealed his movements, his advanced cavalry had topped the high grounds, before the British were apprised that they were on the eve of an engagement.

Before daybreak, according to the custom of the English

army, the troops were under arms, and consequently ready "for the fray." The French advanced pickets were promptly supported by their infantry brigades—column after column followed in order of battle—and with delight, Wellesley observed that the combat he had courted was unavoidable.

The relative force of the rival armies was pretty equal. The French consisted of three divisions of infantry, one of cavalry, and twenty-three guns of light calibre. Wellesley was stronger in infantry, equal in artillery, but in cavalry greatly inferior to his opponent. The preparatory dispositions were rapidly effected by the French general—a little before ten o'clock he commenced his attack, and the contest at Vimeiro opened.

The French attacks were separately made, but they were nearly simultaneous. Laborde, who commanded the left wing, consisting of five thousand men, moved along the valley, to carry the eminence on which the advanced brigade of Wellesley's army was in position. The village and churchyard were strongly occupied by British light troops, and part of the 43rd—while seven pieces of artillery opened with shrapnel shells upon the column, as it came on with all the imposing steadiness for which French troops are so distinguished. The fire of the British skirmishers, who were extended along the front of the plateau, wherever trees or banks would cover them, was also particularly destructive. Unshaken by the cannonade, the enemy pressed forward, and, mounting the hill, boldly confronted the British 50th, who, with a company of the 95th, were formed on the crest. That gallant regiment waited until their opponents had nearly crowned the height, when, after delivering a shattering volley at thirty paces' distance, they rushed forward with the bayonet, and broke through the angle of the column. The French at first offered a stout resistance, but they were driven from the field with great slaughter. A separate attack made on the village by a French corps, who had advanced on the right of the large column, was defeated by Acland's brigade; while a squadron of the 20th Light Dragoons charged Laborde's disordered ranks, and the rout of the enemy was completed. Nearly one thousand of the enemy were left upon the field, and seven guns and three hundred prisoners were taken.

The pursuit of the routed enemy was continued for a considerable distance, until their reserved cavalry, under Margaron, checked the small but gallant band of British dragoons: who, now obliged to yield to numbers, were driven back with heavy

loss, in which, unfortunately, their brave leader, Lieutenant-Colonel Taylor, was included. A small column under Brennier, which had supported Laborde's attack by a flank movement on his left, had no better fortune. Anstruther's brigade charged it furiously with the bayonet, and the French were repulsed with considerable loss.

Kellerman, with the French grenadiers, who formed the reserve, made a desperate effort to recover the day. Advancing to the height, he drove in the advanced companies of the 43rd; but that regiment rallied instantly, and while the head of the enemy's column was shaken by the fire of the English artillery, the 43rd came gallantly forward, and, after a short but sanguinary contest, drove the French grenadiers from the ridge at the bayonet's point.

The left of the British position was also furiously assailed by Solignac's division, which had advanced along the mountain ridge. They found the British 36th, 40th, and 71st, formed in three lines, and ready to receive them; but they deployed with uncommon quickness, and on both sides several murderous volleys were interchanged. The 82nd and 29th came also into action; and a sweeping fire from the English guns was vigorously maintained. Nothing could shake the steadiness of the British infantry; and, alarmed by a threatening movement of the 5th Brigade, and Portuguese, who were seen marching rapidly towards Lourinha, the French fell back. But in turn they were fiercely assailed; and, as the mountain brow opened out, the regiments of Ferguson's second line came up at double quick, formed line, and took part in the combat. The word to charge was given. "One cheer, loud, regular, and appalling, warned the French of what they had to expect; but the French were men of tried valour, and they stood to the last. The onset that ensued was tremendous: the entire front rank of the enemy perished; and the men who composed it were found, at the close of the action, lying on the very spots where each, during its continuance, had stood." Broken completely, the French rapidly retreated, leaving the ground to the conquerors, with six pieces of artillery. General Solignac was severely wounded, and carried off the field—and outflanked and driven into the low grounds about Perinza, the capture of the greater portion of the retiring column seemed now a certainty.

About this period of the battle, Brennier, who had got his brigade entangled in a ravine that protected the British left, and consequently had failed in supporting Laborde's attack on

Anstruther, managed to extricate himself from the difficulty into which, from ignorance of the ground, he had involved himself; and, in retreating, suddenly came upon the 71st and 82nd Regiments, who were in charge of the captured guns, and resting after their late exertions, to be enabled to come forward when required. Taken by surprise, the two regiments retired to reform, and Brennier recovered the cannon. Instantly, however, on gaining the high ground, they rallied and advanced again; threw in a well-directed volley, lowered their bayonets, and with a loud huzza, came forward to the charge. But the French wanted nerve to stand it—they broke—the guns were once more seized—and, with the loss of their general, who was wounded and made prisoner, the French retreated in great disorder.

Such was the state of the field,—Solignac and Brennier's brigades separated and disorganised, while, flushed with conquest, Ferguson's success must have proved decisive,—when the paralysing order to "halt," issued by a British general, effected for the beaten enemy a miraculous deliverance, from what themselves considered inevitable destruction. The opportunity was promptly seized. Covered by a fine cavalry, the relics of the French infantry rallied and reformed with a rapidity that did infinite credit to their discipline; and then commencing a soldierly retreat, they united themselves with the shattered masses who were retiring in great disorder, after their failure upon the British centre.

Sir Harry Burrard, who had been fortunately absent while the dispositions for the action were made, and, arriving on the ground during the heat of battle, had not ventured to interfere previously, now assumed the chief command. A decisive victory was won. Every effort of Junot's had been exhausted; every arm of his troops had been bravely but uselessly employed; and Brennier's anxious inquiry, when brought into the presence of Sir Arthur Wellesley, "Whether Kellerman had charged?" showed that the whole of his reserve had been brought into action, and, of course, that no resources were in hand. It was not yet noon: the French were in full retreat; half their artillery taken, and nothing but their cavalry effective. With the British army matters stood differently: the Portuguese had not been called upon; the 1st and 5th Brigades had never been engaged, and the former were actually two miles nearer Torres Vedras than the French. The 4th and 8th Brigades had suffered very few casualties, were quite fresh, and ready for any exertion that might have been required from them. In the

morning, numbers were in favour of the British : at noon, how much more was this advantage improved ! Nothing was wanted but to follow up the victory, and by forcing Junot on the Tagus, push forward direct to Montachique, by Torres Vedras, and thus cut off the French retreat upon the capital. By advancing, Wellesley must have obliged Junot to abandon the few guns he had carried off, and leave his wounded and stragglers to their fate, while he sought refuge in Elvas or Almeida. Of course Sir Arthur Wellesley saw the glorious results his success was sure to realise, and Lisbon appeared already in possession. What must have been his mortification, when Sir Harry Burrard issued the fatal order ; and, deaf to every remonstrance, "urged upon the field with the warmth and earnestness of a successful officer," the advice of Wellesley was disregarded, and the British army, to their great astonishment, were directed to halt and pile arms !

While his imbecile superior had thus arrested Wellesley's career of glory for a season, Junot, after withdrawing his beaten corps, and sustaining well the high character he had acquired for personal intrepidity, by the recklessness with which he exposed himself to danger when affairs became disastrous, called a council of war to consider the course that, under existing circumstances, he should now pursue. Apprised that Lisbon was not secure from insurrection for an hour, short of ammunition, and damped by a signal defeat, the situation of the French army was perilous in the extreme. To force their way over the frontier, and join the next corps in Spain, was almost a desperate alternative ; and the decision of Junot's generals was unanimous, —that negotiation should be resorted to. Kellerman was accordingly despatched to the British camp—and, as the event proved, an abler functionary could not have been selected.

In the interim, Sir Hew Dalrymple had arrived and taken the direction of affairs ;—and thus, in the brief space of four-and-twenty hours, the command of the British army had thrice changed hands. It is, however, but justice to Sir Hew Dalrymple to state, that on being informed that Sir Arthur Wellesley had landed and was engaged in active operations, with proper delicacy he resolved to run down to Mondego, there wait for the expected reinforcements, and, in the mean-time, permit Sir Arthur to carry out the plans he had so ably and successfully commenced ; "but receiving a vague account of the action at Rolica from a sloop of war, he sent an aide-de-camp on shore for intelligence, ordering him to inform Sir

Arthur, if he chanced to see him, that he was proceeding to fall in with Sir Harry Burrard and the main body ; and that though he wished to be informed of the proceedings, he did not mean to interfere with his command. This was on the evening of the 21st. About midnight the boat returned, bringing intelligence of the battle, and that Sir Harry Burrard was in command. There was now no room for that delicacy toward Sir Arthur, as honourable as it was judicious,"—and Sir Hew landed accordingly.

The mischief had been already done :—had Wellesley been allowed to follow up his successes, not a reasonable doubt exists but Lisbon must have fallen ; but Sir Harry Burrard's unhappy interference had robbed victory of its value ; Junot had ample time to repair his disaster ; there were many excellent positions between Vimeiro and the capital, and Elvas and Almeida were open to receive him, should he cross the Tagus. The equinox was at hand, and an army dependent on a fleet for its supplies had everything to dread, while landings were to be made on such a rock-bound coast as that of Portugal. The tide of fortune had been suffered to ebb ; the fatal error of Sir Harry Burrard was not to be recovered ; and, in the exercise of a sound judgment, Sir Arthur Wellesley consented to an armistice, which the incapacity of his superior officers had now rendered advisable.

In alluding to the action, Sir Arthur did ample justice to the merits of both his officers and men : "I cannot say too much in favour of the troops ; their gallantry and their discipline were equally conspicuous ; and I must add, that this is the only action I have ever been in, in which everything passed as it was directed, and no mistake was made by any of the officers charged with its conduct."

But no enemy in defeat could sustain the high reputation that years of conquest had bestowed upon them, better than Junot's troops at Vimeiro. A braver field was never won ; and throughout the day the French behaved like men whose battles had ever terminated in victories. All fought most gallantly ; and the grenadiers, who formed the reserve, elicited the admiration of their opponents, by the determination with which they pushed through a cross fire of grape and musketry, when advancing to the heights, from which the bayonets of the British only could drive them back. No wonder that the slaughter was commensurate with the obstinacy of the combat ; and when the numbers are considered, the casualties will appear immense.

The enemy brought some twelve or thirteen thousand men into action ; and by a moderate estimate they lost almost a fourth. The British casualties were much lighter, amounting in the whole to not eight hundred *hors-de-combat.* To ascertain Junot's actual loss is difficult. The French returns are always notoriously erroneous ; and when it is remembered that their attacks were made in close column, and that their advance was always exposed to a sweeping fire of the British guns, and reserved volleys of musketry from the infantry, it may be easily imagined that the slaughter must have been consequently great.

Immediately on assuming the command, ascertaining the state of the British army, and obtaining from Sir Arthur Wellesley a brief but clear explanation of recent operations, Sir Hew determined to advance, and orders to that effect were issued. But the moment for successful action had passed away, and in military affairs a lost opportunity can rarely be recalled. What results might have arisen from the dispositions of Sir Hew were fated to remain matters of conjecture ; for Kellerman, with a suitable escort of cavalry, arrived at the British outposts, and was immediately conducted to the quarters of the British general.

It caused no slight alarm to the outlying pickets, when Kellerman's escort at first appeared, but it was immediately ascertained that the object of the visit was pacific ; the French general being the bearer of a proposition for a suspension of arms, as a preparatory step to the evacuation of Portugal by the invaders. An armistice for forty-eight hours was concluded ; and a negotiation, than which none was afterwards more extensively canvassed nor more differently estimated, commenced, which ended in what was termed the Convention of Cintra.

The arrival of Kellerman at the British camp occasioned an intense curiosity, both as to the nature of the proposals which he bore, and the reception they were likely to meet with. Conjecture was busily employed ; some asserting that Sir Arthur Wellesley was hostile to any armistice whatever ; while others affirmed, that he was so deeply disgusted with Burrard's weakness, in preventing the victory of the 21st from being followed up, that he had expressed himself as being totally indifferent to what ulterior measures Sir Hew and Sir Harry might adopt. "Murmurs might here and there be heard, all of them condemnatory of that excess of caution which had checked a victorious army in the midst of its career ; whilst a thousand

wishes were expressed, that the new chief's arrival had been delayed till the campaign, so prosperously begun, had been brought to a conclusion."

In the meantime, Junot had retired to Lisbon, having taken up two strong positions at the Cabeca de Montechique and Mafra. While the late events had been in progress, the most delusory accounts were transmitted to the capital, and there promulgated by the French authorities, all detailing imaginary victories which had been gained already, as well as those which were shortly to be won. But, on the evening of the 23rd, intelligence of the defeat at Vimeiro reached Lisbon, with the usual exaggerations ; and its effect was so visible in undisguised demonstrations of joy to which the inhabitants gave expression, that an immediate insurrection was momentarily dreaded. Still an attempt was made to blind the populace ; and when Junot arrived late in the afternoon with the reserve, a royal salute was fired in honour of his victory ; but the farce could not be sustained, and the return of Kellerman, accompanied by Colonel Murray, confirmed the report that Junot had actually proposed to capitulate.

The celebrated convention was eventually brought to a conclusion. It contained twenty-two articles, to which three additional ones were subsequently affixed. It was signed at Lisbon, on the 30th of August, by General Kellerman and the Quarter-Master-General Colonel Murray.

It would be now a dry and useless narrative, to detail the progress of the negotiation from its opening at Vimeiro, until it was ratified at Lisbon. To many of its provisions objections were urged by Sir Arthur Wellesley. To the ill-defined article respecting "the property" which the French should be allowed to take away, a stipulation that the port of Lisbon should be considered neutral, and a permission given to the Russian fleet to return to the Baltic, Sir Arthur gave his decided opposition. The former, Kellerman explained as meaning "the military baggage and equipments" of his army—and as the latter met the strongest disapprobation of the British admiral, it was finally disallowed. On another and most important point, Sir Arthur was also at issue in opinion with the generals in command ; namely, the duration of the armistice—Sir Arthur insisting that it should be limited to eight-and-forty hours, while Sir Hew assented to Kellerman's proposition—that it was to be considered unlimited until either party should declare it ended ; and that, in such event, forty-eight hours should elapse before hostilities

recommenced. The opposite views taken by Sir Hew Dalrymple from Sir Arthur Wellesley, appear to have arisen from a strange want of confidence in his own strength and resources, and consequently, in a wish to procrastinate until Sir John Moore could land and join him ; whereas, a very little consideration must have convinced Sir Hew, that Junot was radically weak, or, with possession of the capital, the Tagus, and the forts, he never would have stooped to propose a suspension of arms.

On being acquainted with the absurd demand made by Junot regarding the integrity of the Russian fleet, the British admiral returned a prompt and peremptory refusal ; and Sir Arthur Wellesley seized that as a fitting opportunity to end the armistice, and earnestly pressed Sir Hew to notify to the Duke of Abrantes that hostilities should recommence.

If Sir Arthur Wellesley felt dissatisfied with the measures adopted by those who had superseded him in the command, the disgust generally produced throughout the army, by the infelicitous appointments of the Government was "deep, not loud." From the moment the fatal order of the 21st was issued, the troops reposed no confidence in their new leaders ; and even to the youngest soldier, the incompetency of Sir Harry and Sir Hew was perfectly apparent.

While the convention was still incomplete, awaiting the decision of the British admiral, the English camp was every day filled with idle rumours : and all were kept in anxious suspense as to the termination of this unfortunate diplomacy. "Officers of every rank met together, indeed, in coteries, to indulge in an occupation, to which soldiers upon active service are peculiarly prone, namely, speculation as to the future ; and couriers came in from time to time, with despatches of greater or less moment, from different parts of the country. But neither the speculations on the one hand, nor the despatches on the other, proved worthy of being recorded at length, though they were not without interest at the moment." When all were in the highest excitement, the answer of the admiral was received ; and as his refusal to acknowledge the neutrality of the Tagus, or allow the Russian fleet to quit that harbour for any destination but a British port, was peremptorily expressed, it was believed, from the haughty tone that Junot had assumed, that all hope of an amicable adjustment was ended, and that hostilities would immediately recommence.

The joy that Sir Charles Cotton's decision occasioned, might have sufficiently indicated to the British commander-in-chief,

how little his pacific diplomacy was in unison with the feelings of his troops. All in the camp looked forward to the expiration of the armistice with impatience ; and when it was intimated that the army should parade next morning in marching order, it was considered certain that active operations were about to be resumed without delay. The arrival of Sir John Moore at this crisis in Maceira Bay, seemed the only circumstance wanted to insure the rejection of all further negotiation ; and although the tempestuous weather had rendered it impossible as yet to disembark the troops, an abatement of the gale might at this season of the year have been reasonably expected—and then the line of Torres Vedras was open to Sir John's corps when landed. The intended plan of operations was publicly discussed. Sir Arthur Wellesley, it was believed, would advance by his left from Ramahal to Bucellas, and turn the heights of Cabeza—the Portuguese, moving by the coast-road, should occupy Mafra; and thus assailed, and threatened on three quarters, Junot must have risked a battle, or retired into Lisbon, where a close blockade would have produced an unconditional surrender. But these proved only idle speculations—Junot was too well satisfied with the terms of the convention, to allow the rejection of a single article to interrupt the completion of a treaty so favourable, in every sense, to the interests of the French. The stipulations regarding the Russian admiral and his fleet were, therefore, at once abandoned—the convention ratified—and in the brief space of seventeen days, the first campaign in Portugal was closed.

On September 11th, the first division of the French army embarked under the protection of the second and third,—and next day they were in turn put on ship-board, and preserved as much as possible from insult or injury by a brigade of British troops. The citadel was instantly occupied by an English garrison, and Portugal declared to be now "unpolluted by a Frenchman's foot." Nothing could exceed the joy that the Portuguese exhibited at their deliverance ; for nine nights and days the city was illuminated, the bells rang merrily, and all ranks appeared to have but one common feeling—the liveliest exultation at the departure of their oppressors.

As matters proceeded, Sir Arthur Wellesley's conviction of the incapacity of Sir Hew Dalrymple appears to have become more confirmed, and finding that his relations with the commander-in-chief were gradually becoming less cordial, and of course, neither satisfactory to himself, nor of utility to the public, Sir Arthur

Wellesley determined on returning to England, and addressed the annexed letter to Sir Hew Dalrymple :

"LUMIAR, *September 17th*, 1808.

"SIR,

"The embarkation of the French troops having brought to a final close the operations of the army in Portugal, and as in the present state of the season some time must elapse before the troops can enter upon any other active operation, and as I understand you have sent Lord William Bentinck on the service for which you had thought me qualified, and it is not probable that there will be an opportunity for active service, or that you will require my assistance at this particular moment, or for some time to come, I am induced to request your permission to go to England.

"The situation of my office of Chief Secretary in Ireland, of which the duties have been done lately by a gentleman who is now dead, renders it desirable, under these circumstances, that I should be in England as soon as possible, to ascertain whether it is his majesty's pleasure that I should continue to hold it, or that I should relinquish it. I have therefore to request that you will give me leave to go to England by the first ship that shall sail.

"I have the honour to be, etc.,

"ARTHUR WELLESLEY."

And yet the application appears to have been reluctantly made ; Sir Arthur Wellesley felt all that conscious superiority which a master mind exercises over those of inferior character—and had Sir Hew Dalrymple possessed sufficient tact to have availed himself of those talents, which in so brief a period were afterwards so fully developed, how differently might that campaign have closed—and, a name remembered only as being affixed to the convention, might have been emblazoned in British history as the conqueror of Junot !

While Sir Arthur Wellesley returned on leave of absence, Sir Hew Dalrymple was recalled under circumstances which sufficiently implied "that the country was not satisfied with the result of the two late victories." Sir Harry Burrard, who succeeded him, under the plea of bad health, resigned after a few days, "and the command then devolved upon one, whom, next to Sir Arthur Wellesley, the troops most respected and loved—Lieutenant-General Sir John Moore."

Never did a commanding officer return to explain his conduct to a country less disposed to listen calmly to his justification, than Sir Hew Dalrymple. Popular dissatisfaction had broke forth, "with such a torrent of rabid malevolence, that all feelings of right and justice were overborne, and the voice of truth stifled by their obstreperous cry." Throughout the kingdom, meetings were publicly convened, to express the general indignation of the people at the treaty that had been concluded; and to demand from the Government, that all concerned in the convention should be visited with the signal displeasure of both the country and the king.

Never had national exultation been so suddenly and unexpectedly suppressed. "The official accounts of the battle reached England a fortnight before the news of the armistice and convention: tidings came with it that the French had proposed to evacuate Portugal; and the news of Junot's unconditional surrender was looked for as what must necessarily ensue. When the terms of the convention were received, the Park and Tower guns were fired; but the public feeling was not in accordance with this demonstration of joy, and never was any public feeling so unanimously and instantaneously manifested. The hopes of the nation had been raised to the highest pitch, and their disappointment was in proportion."

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"The newspapers joined in one cry of wonder and abhorrence. . . . . Some refused to disgrace their pages by inserting the treaty; others surrounded it with broad black lines, putting their journal in mourning for the dismal intelligence it contained; some headed the page with a representation of three gibbets, and a general suspended from each."

Such was the state of popular feeling when Sir Arthur Wellesley landed in England. His name was entangled with generals who had not won the fields of Rolica and Vimeiro, but who had completed a treaty which, it was asserted, had disgraced the honour and ruined the interests of Britain. Although primarily opposed to a moment's delay in operations, and determined upon pressing the French army to the uttermost on the day of the 21st, as well as being subsequently opposed to many articles of the convention, Sir Arthur could not escape being mixed in the unpopularity of the whole proceedings; and it required that a means for justification should be afforded him, before public opinion was disabused—and that

that share alone in the transaction which he individually bore, should be publicly ascertained, and properly appreciated.

In accordance with the demands of the country, the king directed that a full investigation should take place into all matters connected with a transaction which had disappointed the hopes and expectations of the nation. A Board of Inquiry, consisting of seven general officers, was accordingly directed to assemble. They met at the Royal College at Chelsea ; and their sittings continued from November 14th until December 27th, 1808.

The tedious proceedings of the Court of Inquiry kept the public mind in an unsettled state : and pending the report of the Board of General Officers, the late commanders in Portugal for more than a month were exposed to unmeasured invective, while the worst constructions were put upon any portion of their conduct which admitted of a doubt. At last the Board delivered their opinions. The report was neither luminous nor satisfactory ; and the officers, who had all throughout acted with delicacy and impartiality, acknowledged the difficulty of coming to a more decisive conclusion :

"It appears a point on which no evidence adduced can enable the Board to pronounce with confidence whether or not a pursuit after the battle of the 21st could have been efficacious : nor can the Board feel competent to determine on the expedience of a forward movement to Torres Vedras, when Sir Harry Burrard has stated weighty considerations against such a measure. Further, it is to be observed, that so many collateral circumstances could not be known in the moment of the enemy's repulse, as afterwards became clear to the army, and have been represented to the Board. And considering the extraordinary circumstances under which two new commanding generals arrived from the ocean, and joined the army (the one during, and the other immediately after a battle, and those successively superseding each other, and both the original commanders, within the space of twenty-four hours), it is not surprising that the army was not carried forward until the second day after the action, from the necessity of the generals being acquainted with the actual state of things, and of their army, and proceeding accordingly.

"It appears that the Convention of Cintra, in its progress and conclusion, or at least all the principal articles of it, were not objected to by the five distinguished lieutenant-generals of that army ; and other general officers who were in that service,

whom we have had an opportunity to examine, have also concurred in the great advantages that were immediately gained to the country of Portugal, to the army and navy, and to the general service, by the conclusion of the convention at that time."

Whatever difficulty the Board might find, in adjudicating on the policy or demerits of the treaty, the king, while he assented to the opinion expressed by the Court, that further proceedings were not required, expressed "his own unequivocal disapprobation of the provisions of the convention,"—and this was duly conveyed, through Lord Castlereagh, to his royal highness the commander-in-chief:

"DOWNING STREET, *January 18th*, 1809.

"The king has taken into his consideration the report of the Board of Inquiry, together with the documents and opinions thereunto annexed.

"While his majesty adopts the unanimous opinion of the Board, that no further military proceeding is necessary to be had upon the transactions referred to in their investigation, his majesty does not intend thereby to convey any expression of his majesty's satisfaction, at the terms and conditions of the armistice or convention.

. . . . . .

"At the close of the inquiry, the king (abstaining from any observations upon other parts of the convention) repeats his disapprobation of those articles; his majesty deeming it necessary that his sentiments should be clearly understood, as to the impropriety and danger of the unauthorised admission into military conventions of articles of such a description, which, especially when incautiously framed, may lead to the most injurious consequences.

"His majesty cannot forbear further to observe that Lieutenant-General Sir Hew Dalrymple's delaying to transmit for his information the armistice concluded on August 22nd, until September 4th, when he at the same time transmitted the ratified convention, was calculated to produce great public inconvenience; and that such public inconvenience did, in fact, result therefrom.

"CASTLEREAGH."

After the termination of the inquiry, Sir Arthur Wellesley returned to his duties as Chief Secretary for Ireland, he having

resumed that office immediately on his landing from Portugal. In January, 1809, he took his seat in Parliament—and in his place there, had the gratification to receive the thanks of the Commons of Great Britain for his gallantry and skill at the battle of Vimeiro.

CHAPTER VI

NAPOLEON saw the dangerous position in which his usurpation of the throne of the Bourbons had placed him. A reaction had been awakened in the Peninsula, pregnant alike with danger to his person and his power. No prophecy was required to point out to him the threatening appearances of coming events; and his resolution was promptly taken, to crush in its budding that spirit of independence, which, if suffered to mature, would prove fatal to his throne and dynasty. The fatal step was taken—it could not be recalled. From the sword security could only be obtained; and no matter what blood it cost, the dawning of liberty in Spain must be promptly and utterly extinguished. With such convictions, Napoleon instantly prepared for one of those gigantic efforts which have stamped this age with the greatness of antiquity.

To the senate he communicated his intentions: "I am determined," he said, "to carry on the war in Spain with the utmost activity, and to destroy the armies which England has disembarked in that country. The future security of my subjects, a maritime peace, and the security of commerce, equally depend upon these important operations."

The appeal was received, as all his other ordinances were, by a body so totally subservient to his will. Again the conscription was resorted to; one year's had been called out already, but a further demand was made for 80,000 men, although their services, by the laws of France, were not rated as available until 1810. From the military masses dispersed over every part of Europe, the choicest soldiers were selected. The Imperial Guard, "the veterans of Jena, of Austerlitz, of Friedland, reduced in number, but of confirmed hardihood, were collected into one corps, and marched towards Spain. A host of cavalry, unequalled for enterprise and knowledge of war, were also directed against that devoted land; and a long train of gallant soldiers followed, until 200,000 men, accustomed to battle, had penetrated the gloomy fastnesses of the Western Pyrenees."

After putting into motion the different corps destined for service on the Peninsula, Napoleon made a rapid journey into Germany, to meet the Emperor Alexander at Erfurth. The deliberations between the rulers of France and Russia terminated in a proposal for a general peace, conveyed by both in a joint letter, addressed to the King of England. These overtures, after a lengthened correspondence, were firmly rejected; and, with additional reason for detesting a nation who were neither to be intimidated nor deluded, Napoleon crossed the Pyrenees to annihilate the island warriors, who, according to his parlance, "contaminated the Peninsula" by their presence.

"The force in Germany was concentrated on the side of Austria. Denmark was evacuated, and one hundred thousand soldiers were withdrawn from the Prussian states. The army of Italy was powerfully reinforced, and placed under the command of Prince Eugene, who was assisted by Marshal Massena. Murat also, who had succeeded Joseph in the kingdom of Naples, was directed to assemble an army on the shores of Calabria, and to threaten Sicily. In short, no measures that prudence could suggest, were neglected by this wonderful man, to whom the time required by Austria for the mere preparation of a campaign, seemed sufficient for the subjugation of the whole Peninsula."

According to this new organisation of Napoleon's Peninsular army, the first corps was commanded by Victor, the second by Bessiers, the third by Moncey; Lefebre had the fourth, Mortier the fifth, Ney the sixth; the seventh was given to Gouvoin St. Cyr, and Junot commanded the eighth.

The French Emperor reached Bayonne on November 3rd, and remained there until the 8th.

On the evening of the 8th he reached Vittoria, and was welcomed in due form by the civil and military authorities. Declining the use of a mansion which had been prepared for his reception, "he jumped from his horse, entered the first small inn that he observed, and calling for his maps, and a report of the situation of the armies on both sides, proceeded to study the plan of his campaign. Remarkable for the rapidity of his arrangements, but a short time was consumed in deciding upon a course of operations, varied, complicated, and extensive; and in two hours orders were issued to the marshals, and the French corps were instantly put in motion."

The French armies appeared to have imbibed fresh life from the presence of their Emperor ; and nothing could surpass the rapidity with which the opening movements of the campaign were executed. By the new arrangements, Moncey was directed to leave a division in front of Pampeluna, and concentrate the remainder of his corps at Lodosa, to hold the Spanish divisions on the Aragon in check. Colbert's light cavalry marched upon Logrono. The first and fourth corps were directed against Blake ; and Soult, with the second, against Belvidere ; while Napoleon, with the Guards and reserve, followed the movements of the Duke of Dalmatia.

Soult, with his characteristic celerity, had reached Briviesca on the morning of the 9th, taken the command of the corps to which he had been appointed, and instantly commenced his march for the terrace of Monasterio, which overlooks the plains of Burgos. There he established his head-quarters, detaching his light cavalry, under Franceschi, to Arlanzon, with orders to cross that river, descend the left bank, and thus cut off all communication with the capital.

Before daylight on the 10th, Soult broke up from Monasterio; and at six o'clock, Lasalle's cavalry reached Villa Fria. Belvidere, who had taken a position at Gamonal, attacked the French general with the Spanish cavalry, supported by a division of infantry and some guns. Lasalle retired slowly to Rio Bena, where the French infantry arrived at eight o'clock ; and then advancing instantly, he obliged Belvidere, in turn, to fall back upon the main body of his army.

The French attack was made with the impetuosity for which their troops were always so remarkable. Lasalle's cavalry seized the plain between the wood and the Arlanzon; and the infantry, as they rapidly came up, forming into columns of regiments, regardless of the fire of the Spanish guns, which had opened from the whole line, at once plunged into the wood and traversed it at the charging pace. Mouton's division led the attack, supported by that of Bonnet. After a short resistance, the Spanish right at once gave way ; the left, almost immediately, followed the example ; and, in a mob, the fugitive troops rushed into the streets of Burgos, closely pursued by the French light troops. Bessiers, with the heavy cavalry, rode at speed to the point where the Madrid road crosses the Arlanzon, cutting down all whom he overtook, and seizing some cannon which remained; while, on the other side of the river, the light cavalry of Franceschi sabred the Catalonian light troops. "Never," says

Napier, "was a defeat more instantaneous, or more complete. Two thousand five hundred Spaniards were killed; twenty guns, thirty ammunition waggons, six pair of colours, and nine hundred men, were taken on the field. Four thousand muskets were found unbroken, and the fugitives were dispersed far and wide."

A corps of students from the universities of Leon and Salamanca were attached to the beaten army. They offered a desperate resistance, and their loss was proportionately severe. "These youths, the pride and the hope of many a generous family, were in the advanced guard. They displayed that courage which might be looked for in men of their condition, and at their time of life: twice they repulsed the French infantry, and when Bessiers with the horse came upon their flank, fell, almost to a man, where they had been stationed."

Soult's operations were promptly followed up, and while the fourth corps, after a brief halt, moved towards Carrion and Valladolid, the Duke of Dalmatia concentrated the second at Reynosa, and after seizing Santander, which he garrisoned with a corps under Bonnet, pressed his advantages with a perseverance that marked him "every inch" a soldier. "He spread his columns over the whole of the Montagna, pursuing, attacking, and dispersing every body of Spaniards that yet had held together, capturing their baggage, and filling all places with alarm. The last of the partisans were driven into the Asturian mountains—all opposition was ended—the country effectually secured, and while the French communications were rendered perfectly safe, Leon and Castile were open to their incursions. "These great advantages, the result of Napoleon's admirable combinations, the fruits of ten days' active exertion, obtained so easily, and yet so decisive of the fate of the campaign, prove the weakness of the system upon which the Spanish and British Governments were at this time acting; if that can be called a system where no one general knew what another had done—was doing—or about to do."

The Emperor had arrived at Briviesca on the evening of the 9th, and instantly proceeded to Burgos, which was made head-quarters. The front of the French army was changed, the second corps being placed in observation to cover Burgos, where magazines were established, and supplies and reinforcements had been directed to assemble.

All the marshals were now busily employed, with the exception of the Duke of Montebello. Lannes was deservedly

a great favourite with Napoleon, and a serious accident he had recently sustained, occasioned much uneasiness to the Emperor. In crossing the mountains near Tolosa, the marshal's horse slipped in the frozen snow, and rolled over his rider, who was taken up insensible, and to all appearance dead. Baron Larrey, Napoleon's surgeon, had recourse to a very singular remedy, practised by "the savages of Newfoundland" upon bruised sailors who had suffered shipwreck; and in this case the treatment proved eminently successful.

Although the rapidity was unequalled with which Napoleon's first operations had been executed, it is surprising what little effect the destruction of two armies produced upon the conduct of the Spanish Government. It is almost incredible, but it is true, that "these misfortunes were still unknown at Tudela, and disregarded in the capital; and the Spanish army of the centre, by the instant advantages which Napoleon derived from the defeats of Belvidere and Blake, was turned and cut off from Madrid, before Castanos was apprised that the campaign had actually commenced."

Notwithstanding the infamous desertion of the Government, Madrid was erroneously supposed capable of being defended. The Marquess of Castellar was in that city, with six thousand regular troops and sixteen pieces of artillery. The citizens were in arms,—a junta had been appointed for the time being,—and the neighbouring peasants had risen *en masse*, and joined the soldiers under Castellar. "Now indeed was the time for that city to have emulated Zaragoza; and the spirit was not wanting in the inhabitants, had there been one commanding mind to have directed them. Priests and regulars came forward to bear arms, and old men, and women, and boys, offered themselves for the service of their country; for this purpose, leaving their houses open, and their property to take its chance, they employed themselves in opening trenches, erecting batteries, and barricading the streets. The pavements were torn up, and women and children carried stones to the tops of the houses, to be used from thence against the enemy."

Such were the Spanish preparations, when, early on the morning of December 2nd, the French cavalry, under Bessiers, were seen upon the heights that command Madrid, and at noon Napoleon himself appeared. For days the city had been in a fearful state of excitement; but it was a mob-movement, from which no good result could have been hoped. Bells were pealing,—drums beat,—the populace threatened death to the

invaders,—but all was an idle and clamorous exhibition, and the preparations for defence evinced the greatest ignorance in those who had pretended to direct them.

Napoleon arrived at noon on December 2nd, and found the capital in an uproar. The streets were infested by a ferocious mob : the customary cry of treason had been raised, and many innocent persons had already fallen victims to the ferocity of the populace, among whom the Marquess of Perales was the principal.

The first act of the Emperor was to summon the city to surrender, and the officer who bore the mandate narrowly escaped with life. From many causes Madrid was incapable of being long defended. It was exposed—unprotected by outworks of any kind—surrounded by a level country, over which the French cavalry could freely range, and cut off all supplies which might have been attempted to be introduced. The heights which domineer the city were already in possession of the French, and from these Napoleon's artillery could in a few days have laid the place in ashes. At midnight, when the whole of the infantry had arrived, and the guns had been properly disposed, a second summons was sent in, and produced an evasive answer. Napoleon was not to be trifled with—his light troops were ordered to carry some houses by assault, while a powerful battery opened on the Retiro, and from an opposite quarter the city was bombarded. The wall of the Retiro was breached, and the building stormed—Vellatte's division following up their first success, by crossing the Prado, and seizing the palace of the Duke of Medina Celi, which completely commanded that side of the capital.

These successes were quite sufficient to dissipate the absurd belief that the capital was to become a second Zaragoza. A deputation waited on Napoleon, to request a suspension of arms, while the populace should be quieted, and the Marquess of Castellar persuaded to capitulate.

Castellar, however, refused his consent, and during the night he brought off his troops and their artillery, by that side of Madrid which had not been invested ; and early on the following morning, the French troops took possession of the capital.

The greatest order was observed by express command of the Emperor, and the strictest discipline exacted from the soldiery. Every measure which could preserve public tranquillity was adopted—and in a very few days, popular excitement had abated, business recommenced, the theatres were open, and Madrid

appeared as quiet and contented as if Napoleon was resident at the Tuileries, instead of the château of Chamartin, within a league of the city.

While the reduction of the capital was being effected, the wrecks of the Spanish armies under La Pena Albuquerque and Venegas, escaping the pursuit of the French corps detached against them, had united at Guadalaxara. Napoleon sent off Bessiers and Ruffin to reduce them ; and they were cut off from La Mancha, and eventually dispersed. A corps under Castanos was also driven from the Tagus—Toledo yielded when the advanced cavalry of the French appeared—in six weeks the campaign was ended—of the Spanish army scarcely a wreck remained—and the country was at the mercy of the invaders. Napoleon had assumed all the rights of royalty, and done what no legitimate monarch would have dared, or even dreamed of attempting. He abolished the inquisition, curtailed the clergy in numbers, and annihilated the civil influence they had exercised so long and so injuriously. The tyrannical power claimed by the nobles was destroyed, feudal rights suppressed, and one grand estate of justice established. Such were Napoleon's acts. Regarding his intentions, on his part there was no concealment. To the deputation who waited upon him at Chamartin, from Madrid, to beg that Joseph should be restored to them, the Emperor declared that the Bourbons had ceased to reign, and that British influence on the Continent should be exterminated. The object dearest to his heart was not forgotten, and with peculiar emphasis, he declared that the English armies should be driven from the Peninsula. In that declaration, a melancholy proof of the fallacy of human judgment was conveyed. By those island soldiers thus destined for destruction, the death blow to his power was to be stricken—and an army, in his "mind's eye" already exterminated, was destined to overturn an empire cemented by a sea of blood, and raised upon the ruins of half the Continent of Europe.

CHAPTER VII

The period which elapsed from the Convention of Cintra, until Sir Arthur Wellesley was a second time despatched to the Peninsula to assume the direction of the British troops, though brief, was crowded with events. Spanish armies had mustered in the field ; the alternations of good and evil fortune

had attended them ; they had been victorious, and they had been beaten ; while Europe watched the progress of the struggle, with the wish, rather than the hope, that the contest should terminate in favour of the oppressed. England had partially put forward her strength ; she had her troops in close proximity to the scene, where a nation's rights were about to be decided ; and yet, judging from appearances, that force was to remain inactive. Time rolled on—the season when a British army might have been usefully employed had passed. Then, and not till then, Sir John Moore received his orders to advance—and when the tide of fortune was already far upon the ebb, he was instructed to attempt what circumstances had rendered impracticable, and co-operate with armies for whose ruin the edict had gone forth, and whose destruction had only been deferred, until Napoleon in person could visit with his wrath a people who had renounced his authority, asserted their independence, and left the issue "to God and their own good swords." A holier cause never roused a nation to resistance. None struck for freedom with bolder protestations ; and none, in their efforts to achieve it, proved themselves more worthless, if imbecility towards their enemies, and faithlessness to their friends, be proofs.

The order for Sir John Moore to march into Spain reached Lisbon on October 6th : but three weeks elapsed in completing the arrangements for advancing, as it was necessary that the divisions should be organised anew, and in the very outset, the means of transport or supply were obtained with such difficulty, that it required the greatest energy in the English general to surmount it. The season was far advanced, the roads in Portugal were extremely bad, and no magazines for the subsistence of the army had been provided : these considerations, therefore, induced Sir John, for the better accommodation of his soldiers on their march, to move the divisions by different routes, and unite the whole at Salamanca. The army was therefore ordered to proceed in four divisions : one, under General Paget, by Elvas and Alcantara ; a second, under Beresford, by Coimbra and Almeida ; Fraser, with the third, marched by Abrantes ; while the fourth, under General Hope, consisting of the artillery, with four battalions of infantry and the Hussar brigade, moved forward towards Madrid, by Elvas, Badajoz, Truxillo, and Talavera de la Reyna. The movement of the last of these divisions by the royal road, which winds through the Guadarama mountains, originated in an erroneous

supposition that the route by Almeida was impracticable for artillery. The mistake was not discovered until it was too late to recall the order—and a very injurious delay was occasioned by the adoption of this circuitious line of march, which after experience proved to have been wholly unnecessary. On November 5th, Sir John Moore reached Atalia—on the 8th, he was at Almeida—and on the 11th, his advanced guard crossed the rivulet that divides Spain from Portugal, and entered Ciudad Rodrigo. At San Martin he slept in the house of the curé, occupying the same bed that had the former year been assigned to Junot and Loison on their respective marches; and on the 13th, he entered Salamanca.

Sir David Baird landed at Corunna on October 13th, bringing with him about 10,000 men. When this corps was added to the troops already on their march from Portugal, it was computed that the army under Sir John Moore would exceed 32,000 effective men. Never were British troops in higher spirits; in health, discipline, and equipment, no army could be superior; all were burning with desire to meet the enemy; and, confident in their leader and in themselves, Rolica and Vimeiro rose in glorious recollection, and, in fancy, a braver field than either was to be fought and won. That dream was quickly dissipated. The master spirit of the age was already in the field, and turning his overwhelming masses against the only enemy worthy of his sword.

The occurrences of a few days were sufficient to convince Sir John Moore, that the position of his army, whether it advanced or remained inactive, was pregnant with danger; but as to the extent of his future embarrassments, he could have formed no adeqate estimate. In every expectation, he was disappointed—every representation of the authorities proved false—he had no plan of operations laid down for his guidance—he had no partisans with whom he might co-operate—and the flattering statements respecting the resources and the spirit of the country, were grossly exaggerated, or utterly fallacious. He advanced to unite himself to armies; and when he reached the supposed point of junction, he received intelligence that they were destroyed, and if anything were wanting to increase the mortification occasioned by the exposure of the delusory encouragement the Spanish authorities had held out, it was the disgusting ignorance with which the populace insisted upon an immediate advance upon Madrid. The men who had been the first to hurry from these inglorious fields on which the

military power of Spain had been annihilated, were loudest in this senseless outcry against the English general ; and the ill-suppressed murmurings of his own troops, evinced too plainly that the cautious system necessity had forced him to adopt, was anything but congenial to their feelings and their expectations. That the situation of Sir John Moore was painful and perplexing will be readily understood ; and unfortunately, a spirit so sensitive as his, was not calculated to brook obloquy heaped upon him by worthless allies, on the one hand, and the open display of discontent, which measures not in unison with their wishes too frequently elicited from his soldiers, on the other Swayed by these remonstrances, Moore, contrary to his better judgment, yielded an unwilling consent ; and, while he should have been on the road to Portugal, in an evil hour he countermanded the order issued to Sir David Baird, and desired him to countermarch upon Astorga.

"Still the rooted feeling of his heart was despondency." In the letter that conveyed the order to Sir David, after expressing his conviction that the spirit of resistance had arisen too late ; "but," he added, "we must be at hand to aid and take advantage of whatever happens. The wishes of our country and our duty demand this of us, with whatever risk it may be attended. I mean, however, to proceed, bridle in hand ; for, if the bubble bursts and Madrid falls, we shall have a run for it." These expressions showed too plainly how feeble were his hopes—and they were sadly prophetic of the disastrous consequences, which attended the adoption of operations his own judgment disapproved.

On December 11th, the English army moved forward. Sir John Moore reached Alacjos on the 13th ; Lord Paget was at Toro, with two brigades and the cavalry ; General Hope was at Torrecilla ; and General Stuart, with the Hussars, occupied the villages on the banks of the Douro. Here the first hostile collision took place ; and the first opportunity was afforded to the English cavalry of displaying the boldness and gallantry, for which throughout that disastrous campaign they were afterwards so honourably distinguished.

The little town of Rueda was occupied by the French ; and as they were ignorant of the advance of the British, it was thought advisable to attempt a surprise. This was most gallantly effected by a squadron of the 18th, led by General Stuart. Having entered the village, the British hussars attacked and overthrew the enemy : "The greater number were sabred on the spot,

many were taken, and only a few escaped to inform General Franceschi, who occupied Valladolid, with a body of two or or three thousand horse, that the British army had not retreated."

On the 14th an incident occurred, which caused a sudden and decisive change in the arrangements made previously by Sir John Moore. His head-quarters were at Alaejon, where a despatch, found upon a French officer whom the peasantry had intercepted and put to death, was brought to the English general. Among other documents which it contained, a letter from Berthier to Soult was found. In this despatch instructions were given to that marshal to take possession of Leon, drive the Spaniards into Galicia, and seize on Benevente and Zamora. "He would," as the letter stated, "have no English to contend with, as they were already in full retreat." This intelligence led Sir John Moore to believe that the Duke of Dalmatia was still unacquainted with the advanced movement of the British army—and, were this the case, it was possible that the French might be taken by surprise, and an important blow struck upon the banks of the Carrion, where Soult was lying with a corps of sixteen thousand infantry and twelve hundred horse, before the enemy was apprised that the English, instead of having commenced a retreat, were advancing from Salamanca.

The force under Moore's command was sufficiently strong to ensure a successful issue to the intended operation. It was also in hand ; and to plan and to execute were, consequently, within the power of the English general. His infantry were concentrated at Mayorga, the cavalry at Melgar Abaxo—the entire force amounting to twenty-three thousand six hundred men, with sixty pieces of cannon. The whole was organised in three divisions—a reserve, and two light brigades of infantry—and one division of cavalry. The guns were divided into seven brigades, of which four batteries were attached to the infantry, two to the cavalry, and one was held in reserve.

In the meantime, Soult concentrated his corps upon the Carrion—and, alarmed at his own weakness, ordered the commandant of Burgos to change the route of such troops as should pass through that city, and send them direct to himself.

The British army halted during December 21st and 22nd, having outmarched their supplies. In the interim the French corps upon the Carrion was receiving, every hour, accessions to its strength, until, with its reinforcements, it numbered eight

thousand men. Alarmed lest his communications with Placentia should be endangered, Soult abandoned Saldanha on the 23rd, a movement of which Sir John Moore remained in ignorance. All, however, in the British cantonments gave note of preparation; hospitals were established in the convents, and every arrangement completed for the transport of the wounded to the rear.

Sir John's intention was to have moved during the night of the 23rd,—reached Carrion at daybreak—stormed the bridge—ascended the river—and attacked the main body of the French, which, as he supposed, were still in position at Saldanha. Evening came, the troops were under arms, the long-expected moment had at last arrived, the regiments were already on the march, and, with the first blush of morning, the contest would commence. Such were the expectations, such was the belief of all, when, at the instant, two couriers arrived, and the intelligence they brought extinguished every hope of victory, and gave a warning intimation of the distresses and disasters which ensued.

The French armies were marching in all directions,—one object influencing their movements—and that object was the annihilation of the English. The third corps had been halted at Vittoria, the fourth at Talavera, the eighth was marching to reinforce the second, and Napoleon, in person, was in the field to direct the combinations by which the British army should be crushed, and their "hateful presence" removed for ever from the Peninsula.

Of the movements of the English general, Napoleon remained in ignorance until the 21st; and when it was clearly ascertained that Sir John Moore was actually advancing, the deadly hostility towards the British he had so often and so virulently expressed, seemed additionally increased by the intelligence. "In an instant the Spaniards, their juntas, and their armies, were dismissed from his thoughts; the different corps were arrested in their movements,—ten thousand men were left to control the capital,—and on the evening of the 22nd fifty thousand men were at the foot of the Guadarama." The weather had been intolerably cold, snow had fallen abundantly, the passes of the Sierra were choked, the route was reported to be impassable, and the artillery, which had preceded the column, gave up the attempt in despair, and commenced a descent of the mountain. At this moment Napoleon himself appeared; and, regardless that the report of the peasantry confirmed the opinion expressed

by the general commanding the advance guard, that the road was utterly impracticable, the Emperor, determined that no obstacle should stay his progress, exhibited one of those admirable traits of personal intrepidity and decision, for which his character was so remarkable. The hurricane had become more violent than ever, and hail and snow fell heavily, when, calling on his troops to follow him, he immediately proceeded to place himself at the head of the column. "Accompanied by the *chasseurs à cheval* of the guard, he passed through the ranks of the infantry, formed the chasseurs in close column, occupying the entire width of the road ; then, dismounting from his horse, and directing the rear of the leading half squadron, the whole moved forward. The men, by being dismounted, were, with the exception of those immediately in front, more sheltered from the storm, while the dense mass trod down the snow, and left a beaten track for the infantry, who, no longer obstructed in the same degree, and inspired by the presence as well as the example of Napoleon, pushed forward, and the whole descended to Espinar."

The intelligence thus received was of the greatest importance. The march upon Carrion would undoubtedly have compromised the safety of the army. Not only the most probable, but the most to be desired result of that movement, namely, the defeat of Marshal Soult, would but have added to its dangers and difficulties. Had Marshal Soult retired when assailed by the British force, it is probable that its general, being in ignorance of the rapid movement making against him from the Escurial, would have advanced in pursuit ; and this must have rendered his situation still more critical. In either case, the time lost could not fail to occasion the destruction or capture of the army.

The effect produced upon the English soldiery by the sudden and unexpected change in operations, which necessarily resulted from the information just received, can scarcely be imagined. Troops not an hour since filled with life, and hope, and confidence, appeared perfectly astounded at the order ; all retired to their quarters in sullen silence, oppressed with gloomy anticipations, and, of course, conjecturing the worst.

The 23rd passed in making preparations for a retreat. The heavy baggage and stores were moved to the rear without delay, while the light troops and cavalry remained at Sahagun, to mask the retreat, by showing their patrols frequently in front of the enemy's lines, and skirmishing with their pickets. On

the 24th General Hope fell back on Mayorga, with two divisions, and General Baird, with a third, retired by the road of Valencia de San Juan, and secured the ferry across the Esla.

Never were hours of deeper importance to an army. Napoleon, night and day, was urging his troops forward. On the 24th he reached Villacastia, and on the 26th he arrived at Tordesillas. Bent on the destruction of the English, "his resolution, and the carrying into effect, was like lightning; the flash was no sooner visible than the thunder rolled; the influence of his mighty genius was instantaneously felt; no delay was permitted to take place: the troops marched incessantly; and their great leader rushed on to retrieve the errors of his lieutenants."

Napoleon entered Astorga on January 1st, and there eighty thousand men with two hundred pieces of cannon were united. The exertion by which this was accomplished, was indeed stupendous, and worthy the genius of the Emperor. Regardless of difficulties which the severity of weather, the almost impassable state of mountain routes, and long dark nights, presented, he had traversed two hundred miles of country within ten days, "and transported fifty thousand men from Madrid to Astorga, in a shorter time than a Spanish diligence would have taken to travel the same distance."

Although by a rapid retreat, the British army escaped the fatal consequences which must otherwise have ensued from the unequalled rapidity of the movements of the Emperor, it is now a matter of conjecture, whether to accidental circumstances afterwards, its ultimate salvation may not be attributed. With both the ardent wish and ample means to destroy an enemy whom he feared and hated, Napoleon would not have allowed any obstacle to interpose between him and his settled purpose. The quarry was still in sight, although the first swoop had been evaded; and until the death-blow was struck, he would have resorted to exertions which ordinary minds could not imagine, nor ordinary men achieve. To annihilate the English was the object next his heart; and to determine and effect, with Napoleon, were synonymal. Fate, however, had otherwise decreed.

Before he entered Astorga, the Emperor was overtaken by a courier from Paris. He was indeed the bearer of heavy tidings. The intentions of Austria were no longer doubtful—her hostility to Napoleon was openly declared; and it was now quite certain, that, undismayed by past disasters, she was again about to appeal to the sword. "This was the most important

despatch, either with reference to the existence of the powers of Europe, or his own personal views, that Napoleon ever received." From it may be dated every disaster that befell him ; it saved Spain, divided his power, perilled his invincibility, and by a combination of circumstances, occasioned losses, and produced misfortunes, that laid the foundation for the Russian war, and finally induced the Emperor Alexander to adopt the bold measure of singly taking the field against the man, whom, after Erfurth, he willingly would have conspired against, and to whom fear alone forbade him from declaring an open hostility.

The important intelligence he received, obliged Napoleon to hasten back to Paris, and confide to others the task he had himself intended to have executed. To the Duke of Dalmatia, a commander only second to himself, the pursuit and destruction of the English army was entrusted ; and having ordered the Imperial Guard immediately to recross the Pyrenees, he strengthened Soult's corps with three divisions of cavalry and the same number of infantry. Two of these, Loison's and Heudelet's, were not yet come up, but they were directed to make forced marches in the marshal's rear; while Ney, with the greater portion of the sixth corps, was ordered to support him. Having completed these arrangements, the Emperor set out for Paris at his usual speed, while his able lieutenant hurried on to overtake his retiring adversary ; and the vigour with which the Duke of Dalmatia commenced his pursuit, showed how zealously he had entered into the objects and feelings of his master.

The situation of Sir John Moore, although wonderfully relieved from the additional pressure, which the presence of the Emperor with the troops now ordered into France must have occasioned, was every hour becoming more unpromising. His chances of safety were confined to two events—either in being enabled to march rapidly to the coast, or to fight a battle that should so far cripple his pursuers, as might abate the ardour of the enemy, and enable the relics of the English army to embark at Vigo or Corunna unmolested.

Behind him, the country was strong. Moore had many positions where he could have offered battle ; and on more than one occasion, he might have even attacked the Duke of Dalmatia to advantage. In effecting what Napoleon termed the "glorious mission of destroying the English army, pursuing them to their point of embarkation, and driving them into the

sea," the marshal had merely to press them sufficiently, without bringing them to action, and cold, fatigue, and suffering would do the work of ruin as surely as the sword. What it was Soult's interest to avoid, it was Moore's duty to force on. His army was burning for a conflict : and had one occurred, the issue of Corunna removed all doubt of what the result must have been. If the trial had been made earlier, of course, a heavy loss in killed and wounded must have been expected ; but surely the expenditure of life upon a battle-field would have been in every way more honourable and more advantageous, than leaving hundreds to be sabred, as they issued in helpless intoxication from the wine cellars at Bembitre, or abandoning them, when over-marched, to perish on the wayside from cold, and hunger, and exhaustion.

The retreat from Villa Franca to Lugo was marked by every casualty and annoyance, to which an army in imminent danger could be exposed. It was one continued skirmish between the French advanced and British rear guards—while the troops became hourly more unfit for service, and their resources diminished every mile. On the road, an immense supply of arms and clothing, intended for the use of Romana's army, was met. The soldiers were permitted to take any necessaries they pleased, and the rest were wasted or abandoned. Waggons filled with sick and wounded men blocked the way, and from a sad necessity, some were committed to the mercy of the enemy ; several guns, whose horses had foundered, were spiked and left behind ; until, at last, it was determined that the money intended for the immediate demands of the army should not be carried farther, and Sir John Moore directed that two bullock carts, loaded with one hundred thousand Spanish dollars, should be destroyed by rolling the casks which contained the specie into a deep ravine. The order was unnecessarily but strictly carried into execution : "the rear guard halted ; and Lieutenant Bennet, of the light company of the 28th Regiment, was placed over the money, with strict orders from Sir John Moore to shoot the first person who attempted to touch it. It was then rolled down the precipice, the casks were soon broken by the rugged rocks, and the dollars falling out, rolled over the height a sparkling cascade of silver. The French advanced guard coming up shortly after to the spot, were detained for a time picking up a few dollars that had been scattered on the road."

On reaching the small hamlet of Constantino, the rear guard was so closely followed that Sir John Moore, to secure the

passage of the bridge, was obliged to occupy a hill that domineered it at pistol shot, by posting there the 95th, and horse artillery. The bold front exhibited by these troops, induced the advanced guard of the enemy to believe that a decided stand, rather than a covering movement, was intended, and accordingly they halted to allow their supporting brigades to come up. In the meantime, the column having effected the passage of the river, drew up in order of battle, and the light troops and artillery were directed to fall back. This movement was beautifully executed, the horse artillery retiring at a trot, and the 95th with that celerity which equally distinguished their advances and retreats. Too late, the French discovered their mistake, and came pouring down the heights, as the last company of the rifle corps had safely crossed the bridge.

"Arrangements were instantly made to receive the attack, which seemed now to be threatened. The 28th and rifle corps formed so as to defend the bridge; whilst the 20th, 52nd, and 91st, under Sir John Moore in person, assumed a position on the summit of a hill in the rear. Here, likewise, the horse artillery took post; and now all was expectation and anxiety. The enemy came on with great apparent boldness. His cavalry and tirailleurs attempted to pass the bridge; they were met, not only by the fire of the riflemen, but by a heavy and well-directed cannonade from the high grounds, and they fell back. In a few moments they renewed their efforts on the same point, and with similar want of success; and again, after a short pause, for the third time. But they were beaten back in every attempt; till at last darkness put an end to the skirmish, and they withdrew. At eleven o'clock at night, however, our people abandoned their post. The troops were dreadfully harassed by their exertions, but not a man sank under them; and before morning they reached Lugo, where they found the whole army concentrated."

Early on the 7th the French cavalry appeared in force, moving to the right of the position they had taken, and the English divisions formed in order of battle. "As by magic, the organisation of his disorderly battalions was again complete. Neither severity of rebuke, nor even the example of a summary execution, had hitherto availed to check the wide and fearful insubordination: but when it was known that the colours of their regiments were planted in bivouac on a line of battle, to the joy and the pride of their officers,

the men came hurrying to the ranks ; and, as they examined their locks, fixed their flints, and loosened in the scabbards those bayonets which the pouring rain had rusted fast in the sheaths, they again looked to their officers with the regard of a ready obedience and a brave devotion."

At dawn of day on the 8th, both armies were under arms. Every preparation for a battle had been completed, and the hopes and spirits of the men had reached the utmost point of expectation. Hours wore away, but no hostile movements told that the storm of war was about to burst. The French continued quiet in their bivouacs—"darkness fell without a shot having been fired, and with it fell the English general's hope to engage his enemy on equal terms."

It was now apparent to the most inexperienced soldier, that no good results could arise from remaining longer in position—and that Soult perfectly comprehended the object of his adversary, and would take especial care that no action should be forced upon him, but under ruinous disadvantages to the attacking army. No alternative was left Sir John Moore but to continue his retreat—and he determined, therefore, by a powerful exertion, to fall back upon Betanzos.

A night march consequently ensued, after huts had been raised, fires lighted, and every means adopted to conceal the abandonment of the position from the enemy. A temporary halt at Valenuda produced no respite to the divisions already so dreadfully over-marched,—for constant alarms obliged the regiments as frequently to fall in,—and the soldiery, with abated strength and spirits, continued the retreat at sunset.

Scenes of insubordination and distress marked this exhausting movement. Whole companies disappeared ; and on reaching Betanzos "so many were found to have fallen behind, not only from the leading divisions, but from the reserve itself, that to have pursued our progress on the following morning, would have been to sacrifice a large portion of the army, and the 10th was accordingly given as a day of rest."

The halt had its desired effect. The stragglers were enabled to join their battalions—and, as the enemy only appeared at evening, and showed a cavalry force unsupported by infantry, the wandering soldiers united when hard pressed, rallied under some non-commissioned officers, and repulsing the French dragoons, rejoined their corps in safety. The retreat was now continued with little interruption from the enemy. "Battalions that, on the morning of the 10th, entered Betanzos reduced to

skeletons, marched from thence on the 11th, strong and effective"—and the column, comprising the whole of the infantry, as it descended towards Corunna, favoured by a fine day, and a short and orderly march, would never have been recognised as the disorderly and wretch-looking multitude, which had cumbered the line of march from Lugo to Betanzos.

Corunna was gained—but no vessels appeared in the harbour—and no means to remove the army were in hand. The indecision of Sir John Moore regarding the point from which he should embark his troops, had embarrassed the English admiral; and contrary winds prevented the transports from coming round. Then, indeed, lost opportunities were regretted; all lamented "that a battle had not been fought long ago,—for it was quite manifest, that to embark without fighting was entirely out of the question"—and positions had been abandoned, in every respect preferable to any that the English general could now command.

The position of Sir John Moore was on the lower range of hills. Upon the left Hope's division was posted on a ridge that overlooked the Betanzos road, and inclined in the rear towards the village of Elvina. Baird's division took up the line covering the hills, which still continued to bend inwards, and extending to a valley which separated this ridge from one that rose abruptly beyond the Vigo road. This valley was occupied by the rifle corps in extended order, supported by Frazer's division, which were posted on a height directly in front of the entrance to Corunna, from whence that general could observe the coast road, and advance to any point on which his assistance might be required. The reserve was in the rear of the centre, close to the village of Airis, while a brigade, in column, detached from the right division, was placed in the rear of the British right—and another held several commanding points behind the left of the line, on which Hope's division was posted. While the French remained beyond the Mero all was tolerably quiet,—Soult labouring to restore the bridge, and Moore, in active preparation for a battle, an event now considered as inevitable. This unusual tranquillity was suddenly and awfully interrupted.

On the morning of the 13th, the buildings intended to supply the Spanish armies with powder were ordered to be destroyed. They were fortunately situated fully three miles from Corunna, and as the greater magazine contained 4,000 barrels, when fired, the explosion was perfectly astounding. "It is impossible to describe the effect. The unexpected and tremendous crash

seemed, for the moment, to have deprived every person of reason and recollection ; and soldiers flew to their arms ; nor was it until a massive column of smoke, ascending from the heights in front, marked from whence the astounding shock proceeded, that reason resumed its sway. It is impossible ever to forget the sublime appearance of the dark dense cloud of smoke that ascended, shooting up gradually, like a gigantic tower, into the clear blue sky. It appeared fettered in one enormous mass ; nor did a particle of dust or vapour, obscuring its form, seem to escape as it rolled upwards in majestic circles."

On the evening of the 14th, the long-expected fleet appeared, and the embarkation of the sick and wounded, with the women and children, commenced and continued throughout the night. On the next day all the artillery but twelve pieces were safely shipped, a few of the best horses were removed, and the remainder destroyed, to prevent them from falling into the hands of the enemy. The cavalry, after the discharge of this painful, but necessary duty, had gone on board—and none remained but the infantry divisions, for whose embarkation at nightfall every preparation had been completed.

From the continued inaction of Soult, men's opinions changed, and it was generally supposed that no action would be fought, and that the English divisions would effect an embarkation without any serious annoyance. All was prepared for the reception of the regiments on board the transports, and the boats were ready to pull, at a moment's notice, to the beach. Sir John had issued his last orders, and had mounted his horse to ascertain, by personal inspection, that the outposts were on the alert, when an alarm was given, that the French were in motion, and a few minutes confirmed the report.

Under a heavy fire from the guns in battery on the left of his line, and the whole of his field artillery, Soult came forward with his infantry formed in three solid columns, and covered by the whole of his light troops in skirmishing order. The British pickets were immediately driven in, and the village of Elvina carried. Pursuing this success, the first column of the French, with one wing, assailed the right division, under Baird —while with the other, it outflanked him by the valley. The second column attacked the English centre ; and the third marched by Pallavia against the left. No time had been consumed in manœuvring—and the manner in which Soult came boldly forward, showed a firm determination on his part, to bring matters to a decisive issue.

The British general met these movements promptly, and detached the reserve, under Paget, to turn the French left, and threaten the battery on the ridge. Fraser was directed to support this movement ; and the 4th Regiment, forming the right of Baird's division, was thrown back, and opened a flanking fire upon the column moving by the valley, while the 50th and 42nd were ordered to retake the village of Elvina. A severe and protracted struggle here took place ; but the French were forced from the enclosures, and eventually from the village itself. The 42nd having fallen back, the enemy, reinforced, again rushed forward ; and Elvina became a second time the scene of a severe encounter.

The reserve had now come into action, and supporting the light troops who held the valley, checked the advance of the enemy there. The left and centre were also warmly engaged ; and along the whole line, from right to left, the attacks of the enemy were furiously made, and as steadily repelled. Almost the whole of the British divisions were now under fire ; men, on both sides, fell fast, and the right wing had lost its general, for Sir David Baird had been severely wounded and carried off the field.

At this period of the battle, while the attention of Sir John Moore was engrossed in watching the arduous struggle between his troops and the enemy, for the possession of Elvina, a round shot struck his left breast, and threw him heavily upon the ground ; but though the wound was mortal, he raised himself to a sitting posture, and for a few moments followed with his eyes the movements of the troops, who were gaining ground rapidly. The sight appeared to give him pleasure ; his countenance brightened, and he allowed himself to be removed from the field.

In the meantime, all went gallantly on. The reserve having cleared the valley of the enemy's dismounted dragoons, turned Soult's left, and threatened the high ground on which the French battery was raised. Elvina had been carried at the point of the bayonet, and Palavia was in possession of the English. Night was falling fast. The British were far in advance of the ground which they originally occupied, and the enemy falling back in evident confusion. Soult's defeat was complete, and had light but lasted for an hour or two, his discomfiture would have been signally disastrous. His ammunition was nearly expended. The Mero in his rear, was now filled by the tide, and the half-ruined bridge of El Burgo, was

the only means by which the beaten army could retire. But circumstances did not justify Sir John Hope, who had assumed the command, to continue a battle in the dark, with an enemy of superior force, and in a strong position. He accordingly contented himself with carrying out the original intentions of the dying general, and proceeded to embark the troops without difficulty or confusion. The operation was ably executed ; the pickets, having lighted their fires, covered the retirement of the columns ; and when morning broke, they, in turn, fell back upon the beach, "under the protection of Hill's brigade, which was posted near the ramparts of the town."

Never was victory so heavily alloyed by an individual calamity as that of Corunna, by the fall of Sir John Moore. His last hours were cheered by the consciousness that for his country he had done his best—and his death was in perfect keeping with the chivalrous character an honourable career had gained. To the last his intellect continued clear—notwithstanding that the severity of his wound must have occasioned intense suffering, no mental aberrations were apparent to those around him—and although the sword was painfully inconvenient, he refused the kind offices that would have removed it, remarking—"I had rather it should go out of the field with me."

He was removed in a blanket by six soldiers, who evinced their sympathy by tears ; and when a spring waggon came up, and it was proposed that Sir John should be transferred to it, the poor fellows respectfully objected, "as they would keep step, and carry him more easily." Their wishes were attended to, and the dying general was conveyed slowly to his quarters in the town, occasionally stopping the bearers to look back upon the field, whenever an increased firing arrested his attention. All hope was over—he lingered for a little, talking feebly, but collectedly, to those around, and dividing his last thoughts, apparently, between his country and his kindred. The kindliness of his disposition was in death remarkable. Turning to an aide-de-camp, he desired to be remembered to his sister—and feebly pressing Colonel Anderson's hand, his head dropped back, and he died without a struggle.

As a wish had been expressed by the departed, that he should be laid in the field on which he fell, the rampart of the citadel was happily chosen for his "resting-place." A working party of the 9th turned up the earth—and at midnight, wrapped in a cloak and blanket, his uncoffined remains were interred by the officers of his staff,—the burial service was read by torchlight,—

earth fell on kindred clay,—the grave was filled,—and in the poet's words, "They left him alone with his glory."

History is a stern task—and to execute it well, every feeling must be sacrificed to fidelity. Never was the ordeal to which an unfortunate commander was subjected, so gently exercised—no man obtained a larger share of sympathy from his countrymen—and none deserved it better. Misfortunes and mistakes were half-forgotten—and the failure of Moore's campaign was attributed to that evil influence exercised by individuals at home and on the Peninsula, by whom he was misguided in the commencement, and abandoned in the end. His merits were liberally admitted—his failings generously excused. On the living, popular disapprobation descended with unsparing severity, while the faults of the departed soldier seemed buried in his warrior-grave.

That ample justice was done to a meritorious servant, by the people of England, none can deny. His deserts were appreciated and acknowledged—and his well-earned reputation had nothing to fear, but from the comparisons in which his admirers have injudiciously indulged. To claim equality as a commander for Moore, with Wellington, Napoleon, and Soult, no circumstances will warrant. Sir John was a first-rate officer—but he never could have been a great commander. He was an able tactician —understood thoroughly the economy of an army—handled troops well—had a sound discretion, and a clear head—but a constitutional defect in some degree neutralised these admirable qualities. Moore wanted confidence in himself—he was haunted by a fear of responsibility—and "a constant dread of doing that which was wrong, of running himself and his troops into difficulties from which they might not be able to extricate themselves, were a great deal too active to permit either his talents or his judgment properly to exert their influence. Sir John Moore had earned the highest reputation as a general of division; he was aware of this, and perhaps felt no inclination to risk it; at all events he was clearly incapable of despising partial obstacles in the pursuit of some great ultimate advantage" —and, rich in his own resources, of surmounting difficulties, and not desponding when allies were faithless, and friends proved false.

From his countrymen, at least those whose praise was to be valued, Sir John Moore received the commendation he deserved. In alluding to the campaign in which Moore commanded, "the Great Captain of the age" observes, "I can see but one error;

when he advanced to Sahagun, he should have considered it a movement of retreat, and sent officers to the rear, to mark and prepare the halting-places for every brigade." Napoleon asserted, that to the talents and firmness of their leader, the deliverance of the British army was to be ascribed ; and that, if he committed a few trifling errors, they were to be attributed to the peculiarity of his situation. His great rival bears an honourable testimony that "Sir John took every advantage that the country afforded, to oppose an active and vigorous resistance, and he finished by dying in a combat that must do credit to his memory." Probably the summary of his character, as given by a brother soldier, conveys in brief but expressive language, the strongest estimate of both his merits and his virtues :

"The British army has produced some abler men ; and many, in point of military talent, were and are quite his equals : but it cannot, and perhaps never could boast of one more beloved, not by his personal friends alone, but by every individual that served under him."

CHAPTER VIII

We have seen that the political aspect of Spain, from the time Napoleon crossed the Pyrenees to the embarkation of the English army at Corunna, had been daily becoming more inauspicious ; and it will be found that affairs in Portugal were scarcely more promising in their appearance. Sir John Cradock had been sent from England to take command of such British troops as remained in the country after Moore had passed the frontier, and the conduct of political relations was entrusted to Mr. Villiers. The amity which once subsisted between England and Portugal, and which, notwithstanding French intrigue, was still believed generally to pervade the nation, encouraged a hope that a cordial union of interests might yet be effected between both countries ; but the means by which this could have been accomplished were, for a time, overlooked. To persons unacquainted with the Peninsula, ignorant alike of its wants and its capabilities, this serious charge was confided, and Sir Arthur Wellesley was uselessly retained in Ireland, "while Portugal, like a drunken man, at once weak and turbulent, was reeling on the brink of a precipice."

Sir John Cradock, on his way to Lisbon, had touched at Corunna and Oporto. In the latter, all was disorderly and discouraging. The bishop, an intriguing and dangerous priest, had raised a faction, over which his own influence was paramount, but who were valueless in everything that regarded the safety of the country. The only effective troops were some fifteen hundred men under the command of an English officer, Sir Robert Wilson ; but this force was in some respects objectionable, and the Lusitanian legion, from the peculiarity of its formation, and the exclusive privileges it enjoyed, was calculated to excite both jealousy and suspicion.

Having supplied the authorities with 300,000 dollars, and moved two English battalions from Oporto to Almeida, whither Sir Robert Wilson followed, General Cradock proceeded to Lisbon. All there was in disorder and alarm ; the Government had lost any slight authority it had once possessed—and the mob daily became more troublesome, until, in a brief space of time, the English general found more difficulty in coercing those who were termed allies, than in arranging a defence, or completing his preparations for an abandonment of the country, should open enmity prove successful.

It is now well known, that the abandonment of the Peninsula had been all but decided upon by the English Ministry, and Sir John Cradock, in obedience to orders he received from home, had expedited every preliminary arrangement for an embarkation. The interruption of friendly relations between France and Austria, however, caused the Government to hesitate in removing their army from the Tagus ; and it became a matter of serious consideration, whether Portugal was defensible or not. It is singular, that in this state of doubt the future liberator of Europe should have been appealed to ; and the clear and comprehensive statement which Lord Castlereagh's application to Sir Arthur Wellesley elicited from the latter, went far in confirming the wavering opinions of the English Ministry, and led to the adoption of that policy, which restored freedom to the Continent, and sealed the ruin of Napoleon.

The chief difficulty in carrying Sir Arthur Wellesley's plans into effect, might have been apprehended from the pride or jealousy of the Portuguese, which was not unlikely to take offence at any arrangement which would remove the command of their army from native officers and confer it on a stranger. On this occasion, however, the good sense of the Government

prevailed, and overtures were made to Great Britain which, on her part, were liberally accepted. By these arrangements the Portuguese army was taken into English pay, placed under English officers, organised on the same system, subjected to the same regulations, and in every respect made, for the time being, an integral portion of the British army.

As the chief command was to be vested in an English general, it was offered to Sir Arthur Wellesley ; but he declined it. The appointment, however, was eagerly sought for by several officers of superior character and claims ; and General Beresford, though junior in rank to many of the applicants, was eventually chosen by the Government.

In remodelling the Portuguese battalions, the British general had many difficulties to overcome ; but the progressive improvement in both the appearance and discipline of the troops encouraged him to persevere, and showed what system and perseverance will achieve. Everything necessary for the equipment of the army had been sent from England, and "though a revolution could not be effected in a moment, nor were its beneficial consequences fully felt till a later period of the war," the Portuguese regiments in a short time became creditable to themselves and their commander.

The British Government, determined on making another great effort to relieve the Peninsula, lost no time in reinforcing the troops which still remained in the vicinity of Lisbon. The Corunna regiments, so soon as they could be rendered serviceable, and battalions not previously employed, were marched to the coast, and from thence forwarded to the Tagus. Cradock's force was thus gradually increased, until it mustered fourteen thousand men ; while, by Beresford's exertions, the better portion of the Portuguese regular troops, in nearly equal numbers, were collected between Lisbon and the Mondego. Encouraged by the united opinions of Generals Beresford and Hill—the latter having recently come out from England—in the middle of March, Cradock, leaving a garrison in the capital, moved the remainder of his army to Lumiar and Saccavem.

The English general, having established magazines at Coimbra and Abrantes, used every exertion to prepare his army for active operations ; whilst the inaction of the enemy continued. Several plans were recommended for Sir John Cradock to adopt, most of them remarkable for nothing but their absurdity. Circumstances suddenly changed. Soult crossed the Minho, defeated Romana and Silviera, and carried Oporto by assault. Lapisse

appeared before Rodrigo—and Victor, passing the Tagus at Almarez, marched rapidly in pursuit of Cuesta. The intended movement of the British army to the north was of course abandoned. Sir John Cradock restricted himself to the occupation of a position in which he could cover Lisbon and the Tagus; and in that position he remained until Sir Arthur Wellesley's arrival.

In the meantime the appointment of Wellesley to the chief command in Portugal had been officially announced; and, with increased powers, he was at this eventful crisis despatched to the Peninsula. Having resigned his secretaryship in Ireland, and vacated his seat in Parliament, Sir Arthur embarked on board the *Surveillante* with his staff, left Portsmouth on April 16th, and after a dangerous, but quick passage, anchored in the Tagus on the 22nd.

The effect produced upon the British army by the arrival of their favourite chief seemed magical. Into every department his presence seemed to infuse new life and confidence. Men spoke no longer of defensive security, or speculated on the probable period of their departure from the Tagus; but all looked forward to active service, as a thing consequent on the appearance of a victorious commander; and the general question which was asked was, "When shall we be in readiness to move forward?" The delight of the Portuguese was unbounded, and they welcomed Sir Arthur Wellesley "as if conquest and his name was one." "All day long the streets were crowded with men and women, congratulating one another on the happy event; and at night the city was illuminated even in the most obscure and meanest of its lanes and alleys. In the theatres pieces were hastily got up, somewhat after the fashion of the masks anciently exhibited among ourselves, in which Victory was made to crown the representative of the hero with laurels, and to address him in language as far removed from the terms of ordinary conversation, as might be expected from an allegorical personage. But it was not by such exhibitions alone that the Portuguese nation sought to evince its confidence in its former deliverer, and its satisfaction at his return. Sir Arthur Wellesley was immediately nominated marshal-general of the armies of Portugal; by which means, whilst the care of training and managing the whole of the interior economy rested still with Beresford, the fullest authority to move the troops whithersoever he would, and to employ them in any series of operations in which he might desire to embark, devolved upon him."

Having ascertained that the armies of Soult and Victor were too widely separated to permit of any unity of operations between these marshals, Sir Arthur Wellesley decided on attacking the Duke of Dalmatia without delay, and, if successful in the north, to return rapidly to the Tagus, and in conjunction with Cuesta's corps, fall subsequently upon Victor. Although the latter was distant fully eighteen marches from Lisbon, and it was possible that Oporto might be recovered, even before the first movements of Sir Arthur should be known at the head-quarters of the Duke of Belluno, the English general left nothing to chance, but adopted precautionary measures to protect the country, and secure the quiet of the capital. A Portuguese corps, amounting to seven thousand men, assisted by four British regiments, was left, under the command of Major-General Mackenzie, to defend the right bank of the Tagus; Colonel Mayne, with some militia and part of the Lusitanian legion, was posted at Alcantara, to hold the bridge, or if deforced, to blow up an arch, and thus render it impassable; while at Abrantes and Villa Velha the flying bridges were removed—and thus Lisbon was secured during the absence of the British army in the north, from any effort that Victor might make to reach it.

Sir Arthur Wellesley transferred his head-quarters on May 1st to Pombal, and on the 2nd to Coimbra, where the concentration of the army was effected on the 5th. At both these places the British general was enthusiastically welcomed. The streets were brilliantly illuminated, bonfires blazed on the heights, and the deafening *vivas* of the populace, told how much in unison with the feelings of the nation had been the appointment of the new commander.

The greatest difficulty Sir Arthur Wellesley had to overcome, was to ensure a supply of stores and provisions before the army should advance. The means of land carriage were not to be obtained; large vessels were not adapted for coasting the Portuguese shores; and although there was no scarcity of provisions, as the magazines at Caldas were sufficient to afford a supply, it was hazardous to forward them to those points where they were most likely to be required. But this serious difficulty was surmounted by the English general. Country boats were obtained, and the owners, induced by a liberal remuneration, succeeded in carrying the stores safely to Peniche, and into the Mondego.

The general plan of operations upon which Sir Arthur Wellesley had decided, turned upon the isolated situation in

which his opponent was placed. By able combinations he hoped to cut him off from Spain, and thus oblige him to fight at great disadvantage or save his army by a surrender. In accordance with this plan, Beresford was to unite with Wilson's corps detached at Viseu, cross the Douro at Lamego, and join Silveira at Amarante. This being effected, the main body of the British army was to advance directly on Oporto—Beresford, in the meantime, having descended the Douro, seized all the boats, and secured a means of passage for Sir Arthur.

Soult at this time remained in ignorance, that he, whom he should have dreaded most, was in force on the Mondego ; and, stranger still, in direct communication with several of his own officers, whose designs against himself were of the most treacherous description. A dangerous society had spread themselves extensively through the French ranks ; their disaffection to the Government of Napoleon was deeply rooted ; and the Philadelphes, as they termed themselves, had determined to re-establish a democracy once more, and overturn that dynasty which had been built upon the ruins of a republic. Immediately upon his arrival, an accredited agent was despatched by the conspirators to the English general ; and the caution observed by Sir Arthur Wellesley in the conduct of the secret correspondence that ensued, while it encouraged the spirit of revolt, in no wise compromised his own security, nor allowed D'Argenton either to penetrate his plans, or obtain information touching the strength or distribution of the allied forces. Treachery seldom succeeds ; and the plot was too extensively known to be long concealed. "On May 9th, D'Argenton was arrested ; the film fell from Soult's eyes, and all the perils of his position broke at once upon his view : treason in his camp, which he could not probe ; a powerful enemy close in his front ; the insurgents again active in his rear, and the French troops scattered from the Vouga to the Tamaga, and from the Douro to the Lima, and commanded by officers, whose fidelity was necessarily suspected, while the extent of the conspiracy was unknown."

In this disheartening position, Soult's firmness and talents were admirably displayed. Loison was ordered to hold Amarante at all risks ; and Lorge, with the garrison of Viana, was sent to his assistance. Preparatory to his intended movement through the Tras os Montes, whatever artillery could be removed from Oporto, was forwarded towards the Tamaga, and all the surplus powder and stores were wasted and destroyed.

The French brigades were anxiously urged forward,—no

rest could be allowed—the Douro was passed—and its floating bridge destroyed before sunrise. In effecting this, fortune favoured the retreating enemy. Hill's corps, which had been ordered to march by the coast road, had been misdirected, taken a wrong route, and lost too much time to reach the point where, had it been able to arrive, the French retreat might have been interrupted and the bridge preserved.

The bold operations by which the French corps detached at Albergaria Nova and Grijon had been hurried across the Douro, apprised the Duke of Dalmatia of the proximity of an enemy, whose movements were effected with an alarming rapidity, and whose plans were beyond his penetration. To remain at Oporto for the present, and watch their development, was the French marshal's determination ; for nothing had occurred which could lead to any belief, but that the obstacle which the Douro presented could only be overcome by a landing at its debouchement. Loison was considered safe at Amarante. The route into Tras os Montes was consequently open ; and there the artillery and baggage were immediately directed to proceed ; while Mermet's division, without a halt, was pushed on to Vallongo and Baltar, to secure the right bank of the river by seizing the boats, and keeping it actively patrolled. Soult himself, in full persuasion that danger from the ocean was all that he had to apprehend, retired to a house that commanded an uninterrupted prospect of the sea, and from which he could satisfy himself that the bridge was effectually destroyed, and watch the pontoons that composed it, as, one after the other, they came burning down the stream. There he remained, in full expectation that on the next day he should see the British fleet at anchor, and witness personally the disembarkation of the allies.

But while the course of the river to its debouchement was fully open to his view, a sharp bending of the stream, immediately above the town, shut out the upper course of the Douro ; and the heights of Serra, rising boldly, interposed between Oporto and the country to the eastward. Early on the morning of the 12th, the English advanced guard reached Villa Nova—and at eight o'clock the columns had come up, and the whole were concentrated and ready for action.

But no general, and he victorious, was more painfully situated than Sir Arthur Wellesley. A river, deep, rapid, and three hundred yards across, rolled its dark waters in his front ; a bold and vigorous enemy lay beyond it ; no means of

transport were provided; and on the instant passage of that formidable stream, more than success depended: for not only the enemy might elude his attack, but an isolated corps was endangered,—"Soult might retire unmolested into Galicia if he pleased—or, by attacking Beresford singly, overpower him by superior force, and enter Beira. Danger often stimulates bravery to startling, but successful enterprises; and, in this emergency, Wellesley decided on as bold an effort as modern warfare parallels,—the crossing of the Douro."

From the heights which concealed his own troops, Sir Arthur Wellesley commanded an uninterrupted view of the country for miles around—and the Vallongo road at once fixed his attention. Dust rose in thick clouds,—baggage could be seen occasionally,—and the march of Soult's column was readily detected. Directly opposite the heights of Serra, a building of great extent, encircled by a wall which surrounded a considerable area, was discovered. "The Seminary" was particularly strong. It had but one entrance, and that communicated with the Vallongo road, and was secured by an iron gate. Could this edifice be occupied, Wellesley might open a passage for his army,—but where were means to be obtained by which troops could be thrown across the stream, and the seizure of that building effected? A barrier, to all appearance impassable, was unfortunately interposed. Where no hope presents itself, the most ardent spirit will yield. Before Wellesley rolled the Douro,—and "Alexander the Great might have turned from it without shame!"

By what trifling agencies have not the boldest projects been successfully carried out! but, in the annals of modern warfare, never was a splendid enterprise achieved, whose opening means were so superlatively contemptible. Colonel Waters, a Portuguese partisan, had communicated to Sir Arthur the information that the bridge had been destroyed, and he had been despatched on what appeared the hopeless errand, of finding some mode of transport. Fortune unexpectedly befriended him: a barber of Oporto had eluded the vigilance of Soult's patrols, and paddled his skiff across the river. Him the colonel found in company with the Prior of Amarante; and the latter, having volunteered his services, the barber consented to assist,—and with these unmilitary associates, Waters crossed the stream, and in half an hour returned, unperceived, with several large barges.

Seizing the boon which fortune offered, Sir Arthur instantly

got twenty pieces of cannon placed in battery in the convent gardens, and despatched General John Murray, with the Germans, part of the 14th Light Dragoons, and two guns, to cross the river at Avintas, and descend by the opposite bank. Not a movement in the city showed that the enemy apprehended an attack—not a patrol had showed itself—and an ominous tranquillity bespoke a fatal confidence. A barge was reported ready to attempt a passage. "Let the men cross!" was the laconic order; and that order was promptly obeyed. An officer and twenty-five of the 3rd Regiment (Buffs) jumped on board; and in twelve minutes they had landed, unseen and unopposed.

A second boat effected its passage with similar celerity and equal fortune; but the third, in which General Paget had embarked, was discovered by the enemy—and a scene which may be fancied, but not described, ensued. The rattle of the French drums, as they beat to arms, was nearly drowned in the outcries of the citizens, who witnessed the daring effort, which they encouraged by their cheers, but which, unhappily, they wanted means to second. Disregarding order, in their anxiety to reach the threatened point, the French troops poured out of the city, their skirmishers hurrying on in double quick to arrest, if possible, the further transit of the boats, and crush those already landed, before they could be supported from the other shore. The British artillery thundered from the convent garden; and the divisions of Paget, Hill, and Sherbrooke, crowded the banks, gazing on a contest in which, for the present, they could take no share.

The seminary was furiously assailed—General Paget was severely wounded—and the command devolved on General Hill. On each side the numbers of the combatants increased; but on the French side, in fourfold number. To one side of the building, however, the French attack was restricted; for the guns from the Serra swept the other approaches, and maintained a fire, under which, from its precision and rapidity, the French refused to come forward. Presently the lower portion of the city was abandoned, and the inhabitants pushed boats over the river, and, in large parties, brought the guards across. Three battalions were already established in the seminary. The detached corps, under Murray, was descried moving rapidly down the right bank of the Douro; and the assailants abandoned the attack, and commenced a disorderly retreat.

"Horse, foot, and cannon, now rushed tumultuously towards

the rear ; the city was hastily evacuated, amidst the enthusiastic cheers of the people : Hill's central column, now strongly reinforced by the passage of the 48th and 66th Regiments, debouched fiercely from the seminary, and, by repeated volleys on the flank of the flying columns, threw them into utter confusion ; and nothing but the inactivity of Murray, on the right, who did not make the use he might of his advantageous position on the flank of the retreating host, preserved them from total ruin. As it was, they lost five hundred killed and wounded, five guns, and a large quantity of ammunition, in the action : seven hundred sick were taken in the hospital, and fifty French guns in the arsenal ; and so complete and unexpected was the surprise, that Wellington, at four o'clock, quietly sat down to the dinner and table service which had been prepared for Marshal Soult."

The astonishment of the French marshal and his officers at the sudden and complete success which crowned the opening of Wellesley's operations, was indescribable. One distinguishing quality which marks a veteran army, is the rapidity with which it remedies disaster or surprise, reorganises its broken battalions, and, with lessened numbers, becomes, in everything besides, as formidable as it was before. Such was the case with Soult's beaten divisions : they rallied and re-formed as they fell back by the Vallongo road ; and, covered by a powerful rear-guard, leisurely retreated by Guimaraens, to unite with Loison at Amarante.

But astounding intelligence reached the French marshal on the morning of the 13th. On the preceding day, Beresford, having crossed the river higher up, had fallen upon the French outposts, and obliged Loison to abandon the bridge of Amarante ; and, with his corps, the latter was reported to be in full march in the direction of Oporto.

These were indeed disastrous tidings. Virtually, his retreat was cut off, and Soult's position was imminently dangerous. To recover the bridge, which Loison had unwarrantably given up, was not to be attempted, garrisoned as it was by a mixed corps of regular troops, British and Portuguese. The great road of Braga was now in possession of the enemy ; and, by his own genius and resources, the French marshal must extricate or lose an army !

"Not a moment was to be lost : already the British outposts began to appear, and the thunder of their horse artillery was heard at no great distance. The energy of the French general, however, now fully aroused, was equal to the crisis. He

instantly resolved to abandon his artillery, ammunition, and baggage, and make his way, with all imaginable expedition, across the mountains to the Braga road. This resolution was immediately adopted ; all the powder which the men could not carry was blown up near Penafiel on the morning of the 13th ; and the French army, abandoning its whole carriages, rapidly ascended the valley of the Sousa by roads almost impracticable, even for the cavalry ; rejoined Loison at Guimaraens ; and continuing its passage over the mountains, and leaving Braga on its left, at length regained the great road at San-Joad del Rey, a short way beyond that town."

On learning that Soult had destroyed his stores and artillery at Penafiel, Sir Arthur Wellesley pushed Murray's corps, which he had reinforced with additional cavalry, towards that place ; and although he had received no communication from Marshal Beresford, he felt assured that his operations on the Tamaga had proved successful. The main body of the British army moved upon the Minho in two divisions, one by the route to Braga, and the other by the road to Bacellos.

On the 14th, Soult's movements indicated that Chaves or Montalegre would be the line he would adopt ; and consequently, the left column was withdrawn from the Bacellos road and marched on Braga, while Beresford's corps was directed on Villa del Rey.

Nothing could be more disheartening than the situation of the French army. The rain came down in torrents,—the roads were scarcely passable,—the soldiers were mostly without shoes, —and, from fatigue and weakness, numbers dropped from the ranks, and from necessity were abandoned. The routes by Braga and Amarante were occupied by the British. The mountain streams were filled with water ; the fords generally impassable ; and but one line of retreat remained, and that required that the mountain torrent of the Cavado should be crossed by the bridge at Ponte Nova. "This bridge was occupied, and had been partially destroyed by the peasants : unless it could be regained, the hour of surrender had arrived ; for the army was struggling through a narrow defile between awful precipices almost in single file ; and Wellington, in close pursuit, thundered in the rear, and would infallibly attack next morning."

By generals of the common stamp, Soult's prospects would have been considered hopeless and irremediable ; but, with that energetic resolution for which the French marshal's character

was remarkable, though astounded, he did not despond. Selecting the most daring among his officers, he gave him one hundred chosen grenadiers, a troop of cavalry, and an order to force the bridge.

Major Dulong proved that Soult had not been deceived in the person to whom this desperate duty had been confided. He reached the bridge in silence ; a storm was raging furiously ; and, amid the howling gusts of wind, the approaching footsteps of the French grenadiers were unheard by the advanced sentinel, and the soldier was bayoneted at his post. A strip of masonry, barely sufficient for a man to cross by, was all that remained of the bridge ; and the waters of the Cavado, swollen by an angry flood which came down in torrents from the mountains, were roaring awfully beneath it. Unappalled, Dulong crept over this perilous arch. A soldier followed, but not with equal fortune ; he lost his footing, and perished. Other brave men were not wanting—eleven crept across—fell unexpectedly upon the Portuguese guard, and, favoured by night and the false security of its defenders, carried a post which a dozen resolute men could have made good against a thousand.

The repairs of the bridge were quickly effected ; but the British artillery were already up ; and as the French filed over they suffered an enormous loss. A second, and more formidable obstacle barred the route. The mountain path, scarped from the hillside, terminated in a narrow arch flung across a torrent, called "the Saltador." It was held by some Portuguese partisans ; and two attempts made by Soult to carry it had failed. A third, however, proved successful,—and the French effected their retreat.

The Duke of Dalmatia passed Montalegre on the 17th, and the English general entered it next day. Silveira, on the side of Chaves, operated so slowly, that the chances of intercepting Soult's retreat were ended ; and Colonel Talbot, who had been pushed forward with the British cavalry, was outnumbered by that under General Franceschi, and obliged to fall back—and the pursuit, on the part of the English commander, terminated.

Than that brief campaign upon the Douro, there never was any on which two generals might more safely have risked their former fame,—never a series of operations, where relatively in conquest and defeat, the victor and the vanquished enhanced so much a previous reputation. Wellesley's plans were soundly conceived, and admirably executed ; and the extent of his success

was only equalled by the rapidity with which it was accomplished. "In twenty-eight days he had restored public confidence, provided a defence against one adversary, and having marched two hundred miles through a rugged country, and forced the passage of a great river, caused his other opponent to flee over the frontier, without artillery or baggage;" and this was effected in face of a veteran army, under an approved commander, by levies hastily collected, and troops but recently debarked; the former "unformed by discipline, untried in battle, and not three weeks before in a state of open mutiny." With such means Soult was hurried from the scene of his recent successes, and that with a precipitation which, in ruinous results, was only equalled by the disastrous retreat upon Corunna.

None maintained, however, in defeat, a well-won celebrity better than the Duke of Dalmatia. Surprised by an enemy he had not yet learned sufficiently to respect, he had nothing to depend upon but the discipline of his troops, and the ability of his officers; and in neither, at that moment, was he warranted in reposing trust. While every Portuguese face he looked upon was unfriendly,—while a vindictive enemy was gathering in his front, and a force he dared not abide was pressing on his rear,—a mountain-country before him, over which he must retire,—torrents in quick succession,—roads all but impassable,—his own troops clamorous for a surrender,—Soult's indomitable courage brought him through. If ever an army owed its salvation to a general, that of France was indebted for its deliverance to its leader. Baggage, booty, stores, and artillery, all were recklessly abandoned; what could not be replaced was only brought away; and the marshal reached Orense with "nineteen thousand good soldiers." He who had passed the frontier with twenty-six thousand chosen troops, and sixty pieces of artillery, retired without a gun, but with "a reputation, as a stout and able soldier, in no wise diminished."

The rapid marching of troops, unencumbered with the *matériel* an army must carry with it to be serviceable, soon outstrips the pursuit of a body perfect in all its equipment for the field, and Sir Arthur Wellesley discontinued further efforts to overtake his more active enemy. A threatening movement on Estremadura had confirmed him in his determination to return directly to the Tagus, and never was the path of a successful commander more thickly strewn with thorns. Hydra-headed difficulties arose on every hand. Sir Arthur Wellesley found himself with a dangerous population to conciliate—

monetary embarrassments to encounter—a villainous commissariat to reform—a licentious soldiery to coerce—and, as if the measure of his annoyances were not overheaped, the serious dissatisfaction of his own superior officers to contend with.

In attempting a reformation of Portuguese abuses, and as a primary step to render the national army effective, it was necessary to provide British officers for its organisation ; and, unless flattering inducements were held out, none would leave their own service for another, doubtful both as to its permanency and advantages. Strong temptations were, consequently, offered to such officers as would consent. If a captain volunteered from the line, he was in the first instance gazetted to an English majority ; and when he joined his battalion, promoted to a Portuguese lieutenant-colonelcy. In an army where both services were incorporated, and battalions of both countries were brigaded, this placing of junior officers over the heads of those who had hitherto commanded them, could not but be productive of jealousy and dissatisfaction ; and among the generals, more than one resigned their commissions and retired.

It required no ordinary firmness and good sense to arrest the progress of this discontent, and check the remonstrances of individuals, which, however excusable, it would have been dangerous to encourage. Sir Arthur Wellesley's determination had the desired effect ; and his tone evinced a fixed resolution to maintain that authority unquestioned, without which a commanding officer can never hope to preserve subordination in an army.

Between Sir Arthur Wellesley, and the French generals to whom he was opposed, comparisons were freely made ; .and, at the time, varied estimates were formed in reference to their respective qualifications. There was one point in which the character of the British general, however, stood out in bold relief ; and while the French marshals were obnoxious to charges, all of exaction, and many of downright robbery, Wellesley came stainless through an ordeal under which men of less fixed principle must have suffered. No personal advantage, no privations his troops endured however strongly they might have pained him, ever induced the British general to swerve from that integrity of promise and performance that eventually made the English name venerated upon the Peninsula for its fidelity, as much as its puissance and success in arms caused it afterwards to be respected from the Tagus to the Seine.

CHAPTER IX

After the seizure of the bridge at Alcantara, Victor advanced into Beira, and pushed forward his patrols towards Castello Branco. The news of Soult's misfortunes and retreat, added to the intelligence he received that General Mackenzie was in force at Sobriera Formosa, determined the Duke of Belluno to recross the Tagus, and occupy Merida again. Accordingly the marshal abandoned Alcantara, which was immediately garrisoned by Colonel Mayne, and returned to Merida in time to relieve its castle, which, during his absence, had been attacked by a corps detached by Cuesta for that purpose. The Spaniards crossed the Guadiana, and occupied Zafra; while Victor, having established a division at Almarez to secure the bridge, fixed his head-quarters at Torremocha.

Sir Arthur Wellesley, in the meanwhile, approached the Tagus by easy marches; for bad weather, and the recent fatigues which the English army had undergone, and to which previous service had not inured them, had materially reduced the efficiency of many of the regiments. Sickness was generally prevalent, and the mortality among the troops great; but it was not the diminution of physical strength only which the British general had to regret—the *morale* of the army was sadly deteriorated—the soldiery had become disorderly and unmanageable—and robbery and violence were matters of such frequent recurrence as to cause serious uneasiness to the commander-in-chief. Indeed, the misconduct of the troops was now so flagrant that nothing but the severest measures could reform it; and to repress the licentiousness of some regiments punishment was inflicted to the utmost extent. The provost-marshal, a functionary to the credit of the British army but seldom needed, had now extensive employment; for the halter alone could deter men from the commission of crime, on whom all means beside had been tried without effect. The frequent allusions made in his correspondence to this insubordination of the troops, shows the extent to which the mischief had arrived, and proves how much the exertions of Sir Arthur Wellesley must have been taxed to reclaim the soldiery, and re-establish that discipline and good order for which the British army was afterwards so pre-eminently distinguished.

"I have long been of opinion, that a British army could bear

neither success nor failure ; and I have had manifest proofs of the truth of this opinion, in the first of its branches, in the recent conduct of the soldiers of this army. They have plundered the country most terribly, which has given me the greatest concern. The town-major of Lisbon, if he has the orders, will show you, if you wish to read them, those that I have given out upon this subject.

"They have plundered the people of bullocks, among other property, for what reason I am sure I do not know, except it be, as I understand is their practice, to sell them to the people again. I shall be very much obliged to you if you will mention this practice to the ministers of the regency, and beg them to issue a proclamation, forbidding the people, in the most positive terms, to purchase anything from the soldiers of the British army."

"I trouble you now upon a subject which has given me the greatest pain ; I mean the accounts which I receive from all quarters of the disorders committed by, and the general irregularity of, the —— and —— regiments. I have ordered a provost to Castello Branco to put himself under your orders, and I hope you will not fail to make use of him.

"I beg that, on the receipt of this letter, you will call on the commanding officers of the —— and —— regiments, and apprise them of the concern with which I have heard these reports of their regiments ; and of my determination, if I should hear any more of them, to send their regiments into garrison ; and to report them to his majesty as unfit for service in the field, on account of irregularity of conduct and disorder.

"I desire that, upon the receipt of this letter, the —— and —— regiments may be halted outside of the town of Castello Branco, if there should be wood in the neighbourhood, not fruit trees, and the rolls to be called every hour, from sunrise till eight in the evening ; all officers, as well as soldiers, to attend.

"The number of men absent from these regiments, in consequence of their late marches, is scandalous ; and I desire that an officer from each of them may go back immediately the whole road by which the brigade has moved since May 5th, in search of the missing men. Those missing on the late march and ground between Guarda and Castello Branco, must be sent on immediately to Castello Branco ; and those missing on the former march must be collected at Guarda, and afterwards brought up by the officers to the regiment when they shall return through that town."

While Sir Arthur Wellesley was engaged in accommodating the differences upon points of rank, which had arisen among the superior officers of the British service, and repressing the disorders of the troops, time insensibly was passing on, and still the army remained in the encampment at Abrantes. Other difficulties had arisen. Reinforcements, amounting to fully five thousand men, had reached head-quarters ; but nearly an equal number were in hospital, and fifteen hundred were detached on escort and other duties. The commissariat was in everything defective ; the means of transport insufficient ; the army were without shoes ; and, worse than all, Sir Arthur Wellesley's money was exhausted, and he was without any means by which he could obtain a fresh supply. "With an empty military chest, nothing can be undertaken,"—and though the monthly expenditure exceeded two hundred thousand pounds, including a loan of twelve thousand pounds from the merchants of Oporto, the entire funds he had received for the maintenance of his army during the months of May and June, had scarcely amounted to one hundred and sixty thousand pounds.

The operations of the English general were consequently impeded for above a month, and solely from this serious want—a hardship of which he bitterly complained, "and which led him to suspect at the time that Government had engaged in an enterprise beyond their strength. In truth, however, the finances of Great Britain, as the event proved, were fully equal to the strain, and the difficulty arose entirely from the extraodinary scarcity of *specie*, at that crisis, in the British islands, arising partly from the profuse issue of paper to carry on the prodigious mercantile operations and national expenditure of the period, and partly from the vast consumption and requisitions of the French and Austrian armies during the campaign on the Danube."

While waiting for the means, without which it was impossible to advance, Wellesley had ample time to consider the course of operations best to be adopted ; and he despatched two officers in his confidence to make the necessary arrangements for a combined movement with Cuesta, captain-general of the army with which he was to unite. Three lines were open by which the British leader might assail the Duke of Belluno. He might cross the Tagus, join Cuesta, and attack Victor in front—Elvas and Badajoz being the bases of his operations. Or while Cuesta and Venegas held the first and fourth French corps in check, he might operate by the line of Almeida and Ciudad Rodrigo

assisted by the corps of Beresford, the Duc del Parque, and Romana ; or by uniting himself to Cuesta, march by Plasencia and Almaraz towards Madrid, while Venegas supported him by La Mancha. The two first of these plans were objectionable ; and Sir Arthur Wellesley gave reasons for preferring the line of Plasencia.

The force under Victor and Sebastiani was estimated, from the best information, to be under forty-five thousand men. The Duke of Belluno had, in the vicinity of Merida, some twenty-eight thousand ; and Sebastiani's corps at Ciudad Rodrigo did not exceed sixteen thousand effective troops. The corps were, however, not only detached from each other, but means by which they could be united were wanting. Sebastiani must have taken a circuitous route by Madrid, had he attempted to carry with him his artillery and baggage : for the mountain route was barely passable for infantry and horsemen. Hence, Sir Arthur Wellesley prudently adopted that line of operations by which, moving on Plasencia, he might force Victor to accept battle, or retire ; while Cuesta should move against Sebastiani, fight a separate action, and thus oblige the first and fourth corps to engage their opponents in detail.

Unfortunately, no unanimity in views or objects existed between the British and Spanish commanders. "Whilst Cuesta desired, above all things, that the armies of the two nations should be united—that they should fight side by side, and follow up to the utmost any advantages which they might obtain, Sir Arthur Wellesley was guided by other motives, and restricted his designs to a narrower, but a much safer and surer field"

On June 10th the British general set out to visit his ally and a long conference took place after breakfast on the 11th ; and it terminated apparently to the satisfaction of both commanders. The interview seemed to have confirmed Sir Arthur Wellesley in a determination to force Victor to a battle. Indeed, that he should not have done so before, was a subject of surprise to many. But the difficulties their general had to contend with were overlooked, his own responsibility never taken into consideration, and in an eagerness for action the consequences of hasty operations were neither weighed nor regarded by those whose ardour had outstripped their judgment. Sir Arthur Wellesley exercised that cautious discretion which public opinion, no matter how strongly expressed, could never shake.

The arrangement of attack, as settled by Sir Arthur Wellesley and Cuesta, was that Victor should be assailed on front and flanks. The front attack was to be entrusted to the Spanish general; the right was to be assaulted by the British, who should cross the Teitar, and march on Oropesa; while Venegas should operate to the southward of Madrid. Leaving Toledo on the left, he was to push forward to the Upper Tagus; and should Sebastiani disregard his movements, he was to cross the river, and march direct upon the capital. On the opposite flank, Wilson's corps, reinforced by some Spanish battalions, was to threaten Madrid, and operate a diversion on that side.

Accordingly, on July 16th, a bridge was thrown across the Teitar at Bazagona; on the 17th, the infantry moved; on the 18th, crossed the Teitar, and had head-quarters at Miajadas. On the 19th, the advanced guard was at Centinello, and on the 20th at Oropesa. On the 21st the British army halted, and Cuesta, who had marched by Navalmoral and Arzobispo, passed through the town of Oropesa, and united his different corps at Velada.

Victor, well advised of the allied movements, strengthened his posts at Talavera, and despatched a regiment of light cavalry to support a movable column he had placed in observation on the Upper Alberche, at Escalona. On the 21st he changed his line of march from Madrid to the road of Toledo, removed his parc to Cevola, and united two divisions of infantry behind the Alberche. On the 22nd the allies, in two columns, moved on Talavera, to dislodge the French posts; and Cuesta, who marched by the high road, overtook Victor's rearguard at Gamonal. On that occasion the old Spaniard gave ample proof of how little he was fitted for a command. Latour Maubourg, with a cavalry brigade, completely arrested the movement of the column, and obliged Zayas, who commanded it, to display his whole line, consisting of fifteen thousand infantry and three thousand dragoons; nor did the French horsemen give way at all, until the appearance of red uniforms on their right informed them that it was time to retire. Then, and not till then, Latour Maubourg, supported by some infantry, retreated behind the Alberche, and without loss, although many batteries, and at least six thousand Spanish horse, were close on his rear. Early in the afternoon, the whole of the enemy were across the river, and the different corps in position, where they continued the whole of the 22nd and 23rd.

Anxious to attack without delay, Sir Arthur Wellesley in vain sought the information he required, and which he might have expected to receive from the inhabitants of Talavera. Respecting the numbers and disposition of the enemy, they affected to be in total ignorance. The position, however, was viewed in reverse, from the mountains on the left bank of the Tagus, by some officers of Sir Arthur's staff.

That night the British general rode to the Spanish head-quarters to arrange some unsettled details for the action of the morrow ; but Cuesta was in bed, and his aide-de-camp refused to awake him. At three o'clock the English divisions were under arms—and at seven the Spanish staff were sound asleep. At last the old man was roused, and apprised that the British brigades had been "for four hours under arms, and ready to commence the attack," and Cuesta finally declined assisting, objecting to fight because the day was Sunday Victor, in the meantime, remained quietly in a position he knew to be vulnerable in many points—and seemed so much at ease, as to warrant a strong suspicion that the communications between the allied generals had been treacherously disclosed ; and in fact, Cuesta himself was at the time heavily suspected.

Early on the 24th, however, it was discovered that Victor had retreated. Withdrawing his detached corps from Escalona, he left the Madrid road, and fell back on Torijos ; and thus a glorious opportunity was lost, while hourly the enemy were gathering strength. Soult was behind the Bejar mountains, concentrating fast ; and Joseph Buonaparte multiplying troops rapidly between the British position and Toledo.

True to his expressed resolution, but confirmed as to the incapacity of his ally, Wellesley refused to listen to the old man's advice to leave the Alberche and move forward ; while Cuesta, because a French corps had retired, was under the strange delusion that Victor was in full retreat. In vain he urged the British general to advance, and turned a deaf ear to the assurances of Sir Arthur that the French were concentrating, and not actually running away. With characteristic arrogance, Cuesta maintained that his own opinions were correct, and singly "dashed forward in pursuit. His columns passed the Alberche in rapid succession, as if they were alone to be obstructed by the iron barrier of the Pyrenees. General Hill's division retraced its steps, occupying the same ground on which it had previously been encamped. The state of the campaign to an uninformed spectator appeared extraordinary. The army, previously acting

in concert, was now separated, the least effective part being in pursuit of the enemy. Part of the British force had crossed the Alberche, and was ten miles in advance of Talavera, where they remained perfectly quiet, enjoying demi-starvation upon the banks of the Tagus."

The consequences of Cuesta's stupid misconduct were easily foreseen: and the British commander, in his hour of need, saved a worthless ally. The British cavalry, with two infantry divisions, under General Sherbrooke, were sent over the Alberche and established at Cazalega, where they could move either to the support of the Spanish general, or to assist the corps under Sir Robert Wilson, if that were found desirable. Indeed, Sir Arthur's position, through the obstinacy of the Spaniard, with whom he was associated, had now become most critical. Nearly within canon-shot of Cuesta's advanced guard, fifty thousand French troops and ninety-five pieces of artillery were concentrated, while the English and Spanish armies were detached, and that, too, in a country like the valley of the Tagus, where the natural difficulties its numerous rivers presented, required that the closest and safest communications should be preserved.

Cuesta perceived, and nearly too late, that he had been "playing with a tiger"; and accordingly gave orders to retire on the 26th, which the French anticipated by crossing the Guadiana at daybreak, and driving him from Torijos to St. Olalla. Zayas formed, and offered battle; but, on the first appearance of the French column, the Spaniards broke and fled, followed closely by the cavalry of Latour Maubourg. Fortunately, Albuquerque, with three thousand Spanish cavalry, arrived at the moment, and checking the French advance, allowed Cuesta breathing-time to withdraw his broken columns to the Alberche.

The retreat of this useless army was remarkable; and the following pictorial, but faithful sketch, describes the reappearance of troops bent, two days before, directly on the capital, and whose advance, if boasting were to be believed, the Ebro would hardly limit:

"From amidst clouds of dust, disorderly chattering assemblages of half-clad, half-armed men, became occasionally visible; again regiments marching in perfect order; cavalry, staff-officers, bands of musicians, flocks of sheep, and bullocks; artillery-cars, carriages, and waggons, varied the animated, confused, and singular scene on which we gazed—forgetting for the time that all this was intimately connected with our very existence. The

Spanish army, notwithstanding this confusion, had not the appearance of being pressed by the enemy in its retreat ; nor did the scene we now witnessed differ much from that it would have presented under more favourable circumstances. The battalions marched in their best order ; but with all this qualification, it was still a Spanish army—ill-commanded, ill-appointed, moderately disciplined, and, in most respects, inefficient."

On perceiving the confusion beyond the river, Sir Arthur Wellesley endeavoured to persuade Cuesta, "while Sherbrooke's people could yet cover the movement, to withdraw to Talavera, where there was ground suited for defence. But Cuesta's uncouth nature again broke forth ; his people were beaten, dispirited, fatigued—bewildered ; clustered on a narrow slip of low flat land, between the Alberche, the Tagus, and the heights of Salinas, and the first shot fired by the enemy must have been the signal of defeat ; yet it was in vain that Sir Arthur Wellesley pointed out those things, and entreated of him to avoid the fall of rock that trembled over his head."

At last, when Victor's cavalry appeared, and the guards had received orders to retire, Cuesta gave a reluctant consent to take a position where he could be secure, and which, with the full consciousness of his worthlessness, the British general had selected as the only one in which he might be trusted. In brutal imbecility, he remained obstinate to the last ; and, thankless for a recent deliverance, boasted to his staff that, before he consented to save his useless mob from ruin, "he had first made the Englishman," meaning Sir Arthur, "go down upon his knees !"

The country between Talavera and the Alberche is level, and interspersed with olive-grounds and thickets ; while, in a parallel direction to the Tagus, and some two miles' distance from the town, on the northern side, the plain terminates in a chain of steep round hillocks. A mountain-ridge, separated from these by a rugged valley, rises abruptly behind, and interposes between the waters of the Teitar and the Alberche.

Such are the general features of the adjacent country ; and the town itself formed the point on which the British general fixed his position.

"Talavera stands on the northern bank of the Tagus, the houses reaching down to the water's edge. The two armies were drawn up in line ; the British on the left, extending from the town nearly to the Sierra de Gata, its extreme flank

occupying a bold height near Alatuza de Segusella, having in its front a difficult ravine, and on its flank a deep valley. To the Spaniards the right was assigned. Their battalions were stationed among olive-groves, with walls and fences interspersed, and an embankment running along the road that formed an excellent breast-work, and rendered their position nearly unassailable. It was necessary to secure the point of junction where the British right touched Cuesta's left; and, to effect this, ten guns were placed in battery on the summit of a bold knoll, with an English division to protect them, and a strong cavalry corps in reserve."

The order of battle was continued from the Spanish left, by General Campbell's division, formed in a double line. Sherbrooke's, in single formation, was next upon the right. Mackenzie's division, which was intended to form a second, and supporting line, being still in advance towards the Alberche. Hill's division completed the whole, by taking post on the high grounds which here touched the valley; but, by some oversight, the ridge which crowned this chain of heights was not directly occupied. The whole line, thus displayed, was about two miles in length, "the left being covered by the valley between the hill and the mountain; and from this valley a ravine, or water-course, opened deeply in the front of the British left, but being gradually obliterated in the flat ground about the centre of the line. Part of the British cavalry was with General Mackenzie and in the plain in front of the left, and part behind the great redoubt at the junction of the allied troops. The British and Germans under arms that day were somewhat above nineteen thousand sabres and bayonets, with thirty guns,"—a force fearfully inferior,—for Joseph crossed the Alberche with fifty thousand men, and eighty pieces of artillery.

Before daybreak, on the 27th, the French army were under arms. At noon, the first corps reached the heights of Salinas, preceded by the cavalry under Latour Maubourg, and followed by the fourth corps, the guard, and the reserve. Although the dust betrayed the marching of the allied divisions as they moved to their respective positions, the wooded country, which stretched from the Tagus to the heights, effectually concealed the movements of the English general. Victor, who was intimately acquainted with the localities, accurately pointed out the position of the allies, and recommended an immediate attack; —and at three o'clock in the afternoon, the French columns ad-

vanced by the royal road, and that of Casa de Salinas, and the memorable battle of Talavera commenced.

No peninsular triumph brings with it more glorious reminiscences than the hard-fought field of Talavera. The conqueror of that day won afterwards more brilliant and more important victories; but he never fought a battle where he was more vigorously pressed, or so perseveringly assailed. At Talavera, Wellesley had a double duty to perform. He had to provide for the safety of an intractable old man, and dispose an inferior force, on which only reliance could be placed, in a position where they could bear the brunt of the whole battle, and withstand the furious efforts of a veteran army, in every arm thrice their strength.

The contest opened under unfavourable auspices; for by the first movement of the French, Sir Arthur Wellesley was nearly made a prisoner. The divisions of Lapisse and Ruffin crossed the Alberche, and advanced so rapidly on the Casa de Salinas, that the English general, who was at the moment in the house, had scarcely time allowed to enable him to mount and ride off.

This was the most decisive advantage the French gained. By some unaccountable inattention, no pickets were in front, and the French columns were immediately upon the British brigades, before the latter were apprised that the enemy were advancing. Two young battalions—both Irish, and both afterwards remarkable where all were brave, for their daring in attack and their indifference under fire—got into confusion, and were forced back in some disorder. The 45th and part of the 60th checked the enemy's advance, and Wellesley, in person, directed the retreat of the infantry. In safety they reached the position, covered by the cavalry—Mackenzie taking his ground behind the guards—Donkin forming on the high ground to the left that had not as yet been occupied, while the cavalry drew up in column in the rear.

At this period, the battle was seriously endangered—Cuesta, from the strength of his position, might have been considered safe enough; but, as it appeared, no local advantages could secure his wretched troops, or render them trustworthy for an hour. While Victor, "animated by the success of his first operation, followed Donkin with Villatte's division and the whole of his light cavalry and guns; the fourth corps and French reserve, which were directed against the right, sent their cavalry forward to induce the Spaniards to unmask their line of battle. "The French horsemen rode boldly up to the

front, and commenced skirmishing with their pistols, and the Spaniards answered them with a general discharge of small arms; but then, ten thousand infantry, and all the artillery, breaking their ranks, fled to the rear: the artillery-men carried off their horses; the infantry threw away their arms, and the Adjutant-General O'Donogue was amongst the foremost of the fugitives. Nay, Cuesta himself was in movement towards the rear. The panic spread, and the French would fain have charged; but Sir Arthur Wellesley, who was at hand, immediately flanked the main road with some English squadrons: the ditches on the other side rendered the country impracticable; and the fire of musketry being renewed by those Spaniards who remained, the enemy lost some men, and finally retreated in disorder."

The confusion occasioned in the rear by this panic was indescribable: cattle, baggage, and stores, were in all directions hurried off; while the runaways spread over the whole country, reporting that the English were cut to pieces, and the French cavalry already at their heels. During the night a large proportion of the fugitives were overtaken by their own horsemen, and driven back at the sword's point to the position they had abandoned; but fully six thousand of Cuesta's troops could not be recovered, and were returned as missing in the morning.

Night had now set in, and encouraged by the singular confusion among the Spaniards on the right, and perceiving that the apex of the ridge upon the left was unoccupied, Victor determined, by a sudden assault, to carry what he justly considered to be the key of the English position. Ruffin was instantly ordered forward with his division, supported by Villatte's; while Lapisse, by a false attack upon the Germans, was intended to effect a diversion. The attack was furiously made, and, at first, gallantly repelled by Donkin's brigade—but superior numbers succeeded, the English left was turned, and the ridge behind it crowned by the enemy. General Hill, who had advanced to Donkin's assistance with the 48th Regiment, in the twilight mistook the French for British stragglers, and rode hastily into their ranks. His brigade-major was shot dead, and his own horse seized by a grenadier. The general, however, shook him off, galloped down the hill, placed himself at the head of the 29th, led them up the heights, and gallantly restored the battle.

"The regiment was formed in column of companies at quarter distance The 48th and battalion of detachments met

with a formidable resistance, and were driven back at this critical moment, upon which the safety of the army depended. The 29th was ordered to advance at double quick time. The leading company crowned the summit previously to receiving the enemy's fire. A considerable body of French were now in possession of the height. Their numbers rapidly increasing, the drums beat the *pas de charge*; while at intervals voices were heard, some calling out they were the German legion, others not to fire. It was so dark that the blaze of musketry alone displayed the forms of the assailants. The leading company of the 29th poured in a volley when close to the bayonets of the enemy. The glorious cheer of the British infantry accompanied the charge, which succeeded. The rest of the regiment arriving in quick succession formed on the summit a close column, which speedily drove everything before it. The enemy was pursued down the hill, abandoning the level ground on its top thickly strewed with dead bodies or wounded men. No second attempt was for some time made to carry this most important point, and the 29th remained in possession of the ground, lying on their arms in the midst of fallen enemies."

The contest ended for that night. Two thousand gallant soldiers were already slain, and not an inch of ground was yet won by the assailants. Both sides, tired of slaughter, wished naturally for a short term of repose ; fires were lighted along the lines, and a temporary quiet reigned in the bivouacs of the wearied soldiery. But any interval of repose was fated to be brief.

"About midnight this silence was suddenly interrupted by firing, towards Talavera ; not the straggling, desultory, yet distinct reports of light troops, but a roll of musketry that illuminated the whole extent of the Spanish line. It was one discharge ; but of such a nature that I have never heard it equalled. It appeared not to be returned, nor was it repeated. All again became silent. A false alarm had occasioned this tremendous volley ; but we were too distant to ascertain what had produced the violent irruption, or how many of our allies had thrown away their arms and fled, after having delivered a fire sufficiently formidable to have shaken the best and bravest troops."

The failure of Ruffin against the heights discouraged Joseph Buonaparte, and he consulted with Jourdan and Victor how far it would be prudent to renew the action in the morning. The generals differed in opinion : Jourdan advised that a position

should be taken on the Alberche, and that the effect of Soult's operations upon the British rear should be awaited; while Victor was anxious that the attack should be renewed at daybreak, engaging, if supported by the fourth corps, to carry the hill from which he had been so desperately repulsed already. While Joseph, embarrassed by these conflicting opinions, was still in uncertainty by which he should be guided, a despatch from Soult, announcing that he could not reach Plasencia before August 3rd or 5th, confirmed him in a resolution to follow Victor's counsel and risk another battle. The necessary arrangements were accordingly made, and soon after daybreak a general movement of the enemy "gave note of preparation." Two heavy columns of chosen troops, the grenadiers of Lapisse's division, were formed in front of the height in question. "The formation was marked by a furious cannonade, under cover of which the columns pressed forward; and desperate and numerous were the efforts which they made to render themselves masters of the summit; but nothing could exceed the gallantry and steadiness of the brave men who opposed them. The brigades of General Tilson and R. Stewart were here; they permitted the enemy again and again to arrive within a few paces of the ridge, and they drove them back in admirable style with the bayonet, till disheartened by so many repulses, they at last retreated altogether, leaving the ground covered with their dead.

The fighting had lasted without intermission from five in the morning. The slaughter on both sides had been immense, and the heat became intolerable. By a sort of tacit understanding the struggle ceased on both sides about nine o'clock, each availing themselves of the brief repose which both so much required. The French appeared dispirited; for three hours not a movement was made, nor a musket was discharged; "and it was a question with us whether we should advance, and in our turn become the assailants, or remain quietly where we were, and await the result of the enemy's deliberations."

During this cessation of hostilities an incident of rare occurrence in war produced an interesting display of generous feeling between two brave and noble-minded enemies. "A small stream, tributary to the Tagus, flowed through a part of the battle-ground, and separated the combatants. During the pause that the heat of the weather and the weariness of the troops had produced, both armies went to the banks of the rivulet for water. The men approached each other fearlessly, threw down

their caps and muskets, chatted to each other like old acquaintances, and exchanged their canteens and wine-flasks. All asperity of feeling seemed forgotten. To a stranger they would have appeared more like an allied force than men hot from a ferocious conflict, and only gathering strength and energy to recommence it anew. But a still nobler rivalry for the time existed; the interval was employed in carrying off the wounded, who lay intermixed upon the hard-contested field; and, to the honour of both be it told, that each endeavoured to extricate the common sufferers, and remove their unfortunate friends and enemies, without distinction. Suddenly the bugles sounded, the drums beat to arms; many of the rival soldiery shook hands, and parted with expressions of mutual esteem, and in ten minutes after they were again at the bayonet's point."

The assault of the fourth corps on the British centre was as furious and disastrous as that of Ruffin's. Sebastiani's attack was boldly made, and the French came on with an assured courage that seemed resolved to sweep away every obstacle that opposed it. Covered by a cloud of light troops, the columns passed the broken ground with imposing determination, only to encounter opponents still more determined than themselves. "The English regiments, putting the French skirmishers aside, met the advancing columns with loud shouts, and, breaking in on their front, and lapping their flanks with fire, gave them no respite, and pushed them back with a terrible carnage. Ten guns were taken; but, as General Campbell prudently forbore pursuit, the French rallied on their supports, and made a show of attacking again. Vain attempt! The British artillery and musketry played furiously upon their masses, and a Spanish regiment of cavalry charging on their flank at the same time, the whole retired in disorder, and the victory was secured in that quarter."

As victory is ever damped by individual suffering, an event well calculated to increase the horrors of a battle-field occurred, that cannot be recollected without the liveliest sorrow for those who suffered.

"From the heat of the weather, the fallen leaves were parched like tinder, and the grass was rank and dry. Near the end of the engagement, both were ignited by the blaze of some cartridge-papers, and the whole surface of the ground was presently covered with a sheet of fire. Those of the disabled who lay on the outskirts of the field managed to crawl away, or

were carried off by their more fortunate companions who had escaped unhurt ; but, unhappily, many gallant sufferers, with 'medicable wounds,' perished in the flames before it was possible to extricate them."

The most daring, and the most disastrous effort of the day remains to be narrated. The French, still intent upon seizing the left of the position, moved up the valley in force ; and Anson's light brigade of cavalry was ordered to charge the columns as they came forward. The ground was treacherous—flat, apparently to the eye, while a dangerous and narrow ravine secured the French infantry completely. The word was given ; the brigade advanced at a steady canter ; the plain was, as they believed, before them, and in full blood, what should check their career ? Colonel Elley, who was some lengths in advance of the 23rd, was the first who discovered the obstacle in their road, and vainly endeavoured to check the charge, and apprise his companions of the dangerous ground they had to pass ; "but, advancing with such velocity, the line was on the verge of the stream before his signs could be either understood or attended to. Under any circumstances this must have been a serious occurrence in a cavalry charge ; but when it is considered that four or five hundred dragoons were assailing two divisions of infantry, unbroken, and fully prepared for the onset, to have persevered at all, was highly honourable to the regiment.

"At this moment the enemy, formed in squares, opened his tremendous fire. A change immediately took place. Horses rolled on the earth ; others were seen flying back, dragging their unhorsed riders with them. The German hussars pulled up ; but although the line of the 23rd was broken, still that regiment galloped forward. The confusion was increased ; but no hesitation took place in the individuals of this gallant corps. The survivors rushed on with, if possible, accelerated pace, passing between the flank of the square, now one general blaze of fire, and the building on its left."

It was strange that, under such circumstances, men should think of anything but securing a retreat. The Germans, on arriving at the brink of the ravine, had reined sharply up ; and though they suffered heavily from the French musketry, galloped out of fire, and re-formed behind Bassecourt's Spanish division, which was in observation in the rear. Struggling through the water-course, the survivors of the 23rd, as they gained the bank in twos and threes, formed, and passing the French infantry at speed, "fell with inexpressible fury on a brigade of chasseurs

in the rear." A momentary success attended this reckless display of valour; but a body of Polish lancers and Westphalian light-horse came up, and to resist such odds was hopeless.

"The situation of the 23rd was now very critical. To return directly from whence the regiment had advanced, was impracticable. By doing so, the surviving soldiers must have again sustained a close and deadly fire from the French squares; and although the chasseurs had given way, another line of cavalry was in their front. To their right was the whole French army; to their left, and in rear of the enemy's infantry, was the only possible line of escape. This was adopted. In small parties, or singly, they again regained the valley, re-forming in rear of General Fane's brigade, the advance of which had been countermanded after the unsuccessful result of the first charge was ascertained."

A furious attack made upon Sherbrooke's division was among the most gallant efforts of the day. Under a storm of artillery, the French columns fairly came forward, as if they intended to leave the issue to "cold iron"; but they never crossed a bayonet, were charged in turn, and repelled with serious loss.

"Who has ever seen an unbroken line preserved in following up a successful bayonet charge?" The guards, carried forward by victorious excitement, advanced too far, and found themselves assailed by the French reserve, and mowed down by an overwhelming fire. "They fell back; but as whole sections were swept away, their ranks became disordered, and nothing but their stubborn gallantry prevented a total *déroute*. Their situation was most critical—had the French cavalry charged home, nothing could have saved them. Sir Arthur Wellesley saw the danger, and speedily despatched support. A brigade of horse was ordered up, and our regiment moved from the heights we occupied to assist our hard-pressed comrades. We came on at double-quick, and formed in the rear by companies, and through the intervals in our line the broken ranks of the guards retreated. A close and well-directed volley from us arrested the progress of the victorious French, while, with amazing celerity and coolness, the guards rallied and re-formed, and in a few minutes advanced in turn to support us. As they came on, the men gave a loud huzza. An Irish regiment to the right answered it with a thrilling cheer. It was taken up from regiment to regiment, and passed along the English line; and that wild shout told the

advancing enemy that British valour was indomitable. The leading files of the French halted—turned—fell back—and never made another effort."

It may be readily imagined that the loss entailed upon both armies, by a sanguinary and protracted struggle like that of Talavera, must be enormous. On the British side, Generals Mackenzie and Langworth fell; and the entire casualties amounted to 5,423. The French loss was infinitely greater. According to the returns of Jourdan and Semele they had two general officers and 944 killed, 6,294 wounded, and 156 made prisoners—being, in all, 7,389. But English and Spanish writers assert that their casualties were much greater, and return the total loss at fully 10,000 men.

"The battle ended at about six o'clock, and after that hour scarcely a shot was heard. Both armies occupied the positions of the morning, and the British bivouacked on the field, with little food, and no shelter; while the dead lay silently around, and the moans of the wounded broke sadly on the ear, as they were conveyed all through the night to the hospitals in Salamanca."

The total failure of Lapisse's attack, who was mortally wounded in leading his division on, after it had been shattered and disordered by the closely delivered volleys of the English regiments, was the signal for a general retreat. The French, covered by a tremendous fire of artillery, retired to their own position, leaving seventeen guns in the possession of the victors. The marvel is that any trophy could be won. The English, worn out by fatigue, and literally starving—with now scarcely fourteen thousand men embattled—were incapable of further exertion; while their useless allies, though fresh and undamaged, dared not be employed, as they were not even to be trusted when behind banks and breastworks, and were utterly unequal to attempt the simplest evolutions.

A damp cold night succeeded a burning day. Without food, covering, or even water, the British bivouacs were cheerless enough; but, except from wounded men, not a murmur was heard—not a complaint escaped. When morning broke, the English brigades—"feeble and few, but fearless still"—rose at the first tap of the drum, and once more stood gallantly to their arms.

At daybreak on the 29th, the French army was discovered formed upon the heights of Salinas, having crossed the Alberche during the night. Relieved from all apprehension of a renewed

attack, the removal of his wounded to Talavera, where he was endeavouring to establish hospitals for their reception, engrossed the attention of Sir Arthur Wellesley ; and although it was afterwards ascertained that a month's provisions were secreted in the town, it required his greatest exertions to obtain a bare sufficiency to keep his troops from starving, while the wounded were sinking fast, not from the severity of their injuries, but from the actual want of common nourishment. The brutality of Cuesta's character evidenced itself in his conduct towards the ally who had preserved him. He not only refused assistance to the wounded, but declined even to aid in the burial of the dead. Intent upon an occupation more germane to his ferocious disposition, instead of endeavouring to improve the advantages of a victory that had been won for him, Cuesta occupied himself in decimating the regiments who had been panic-stricken on the 27th ; but influenced by the strong remonstrances of the British general, he relaxed his severity so far, as to re-decimate the unfortunate wretches upon whom the lot of death had fallen, and only six officers and forty men were slaughtered. Had not "his cruelty been mitigated by the earnest intercession of Sir Arthur Wellesley, more men would have been destroyed in cold blood, by this savage old man, than had fallen in the battle."

On the day after the engagement, a welcome reinforcement joined the English army. By an unparalleled exertion, the light brigade, consisting of the 43rd, 52nd, and 95th (Rifles) arrived on the 29th upon the battle-ground, and immediately took outpost duty. The regiments, after a march of twenty miles, were bivouacked for the night, when intelligence reached their commanding officer, that Sir Arthur Wellesley was on the eve of a battle. After a short halt, the brigade got under arms with a fixed determination to share the glory of the coming field. As they advanced, Spanish fugitives, hurrying off in crowds, informed them that the struggle was already ended, that the English army was totally defeated, and Sir Arthur Wellesley killed. "Indignant at this shameful scene, the troops hastened, rather than slackened, the impetuosity of their pace ;" and leaving only seventeen stragglers behind, in twenty-six hours they accomplished a march of sixty-two English miles. To estimate this extraordinary effort made by these splendid regiments, it should be recollected that it was executed in heavy marching order, over a country where water was scarce, and beneath a burning sun. As a march, none on military record has exceeded it.

Never did a general, after the achievement of a glorious victory, so speedily find himself environed by difficulties, and these accumulating with alarming celerity. On the 30th, Wellesley was apprised that Soult was moving towards the pass of Banos; and aware how important its possession was for the mutual security of Cuesta and himself, he importuned that obstinate old man to detach a Spanish corps without delay, to strengthen its feeble garrison. Cuesta refused, wavered, procrastinated, and consented; and when the French were known to have been on August 1st within one day's march of the pass, then, and then only, the Spanish general detached Bassecourt to its relief, he being four marches distant. The consequences may be anticipated. Soult obtained possession of Banos without expending a cartridge, reached Plasencia, where he obtained artillery and stores from Madrid, and was now at the head of fifteen thousand veteran soldiers, recovered from their late fatigues, and in their equipment perfect in every arm.

On receiving this alarming intelligence, Wellesley proposed to march with the British army against Soult, leaving Cuesta at Talavera, to secure his rear and protect his hospitals; and to this arrangement the Spanish general gave his consent. The army was accordingly moved on the 3rd to Oropesa—but extracts from despatches, forwarded by Cuesta to Sir Arthur, reached him there. They had been found upon a friar, and were addressed to Soult from Joseph Buonaparte and Jourdan. In these the marshal was urged to press on without delay, and assured of the co-operation of Ney from Castile, while Joseph himself would immediately assume the offensive. Venegas, instead of marching upon Puente-Duena and Arganda, had diverged towards Toledo and Aranjuez, enabling the enemy by this false movement to keep both Spanish corps in check; and in conclusion, Cuesta intimated his immediate intention of marching on Oropesa, and of course abandoning Talavera, and the wounded left there under his protection. This, indeed, was mortifying news. His breach of faith was bad enough, but his inhumanity was still more intolerable. Although he was encumbered with cars and waggons, "he refused to spare us more than seven for the transportation of the brave men who had fought and bled for his country. The abandonment of the town was, as may be imagined, a most heart-rending scene. Such of our poor soldiers as were in a condition to move at all, crawled after us, some still bleeding, and many more with their wounds open and undressed; whilst those whose

hurts were too severe to permit of this, lay upon their pallets, and implored their comrades not to desert them. By indefatigable exertions, and by sacrificing a great quantity of baggage, Sir Arthur Wellesley got together forty cars, which enabled us to bring forward in all about two thousand men ; but there were still some hundreds left behind, all of whom, had Cuesta acted with humanity or honour, might have been preserved."

It will not appear surprising that the ingratitude of the Spaniards engendered in the British soldiery a feeling of national dislike, which their officers at times found it impossible to restrain. The military character of their confederates was held in just contempt, and in all their relations the English had reason to charge their allies with gross inhumanity and falsehood. After their enduring valour had won the field of Talavera, they saw themselves cruelly neglected, their sick perishing in the streets, and their wounded unnecessarily abandoned by the man, who, in common gratitude, was bound by every tie to cherish and protect them.

Now, to such misery was the army at this time reduced, that for want of forage, one thousand of their cavalry were totally dismounted ; the horses of seven hundred more unfit for duty ; the guns were nearly unhorsed, and a large proportion of the reserve ammunition had been given to Cuesta, merely for the purpose of obtaining for the conveyance of the sick, the country carts upon which it had been loaded. A stronger proof remains : on the evening of Talavera, when Sir Arthur Wellesley applied to the old Spaniard, who had more horses than he required, for ninety to replace those of his artillery which had been killed, that worthless ally, "on the very field of battle, and with the steam of English blood still reeking in his nostrils, refused the request !"

Beresford's corps was quartered in the neighbourhood of Zarza Mayor ; and about five thousand British troops, under Generals Lightburn and Catlin Crawford, were cantoned around Castello Branco. Although seriously weakened by the loss of the first and fourth corps, which Joseph had injudiciously withdrawn, Soult was still most anxious to cross the frontier with the second, third, and fifth corps, and menace the Portuguese capital ; but Ney obstinately refused to co-operate, and thus an opportunity was lost of annihilating the power of Great Britain in the Peninsula, that never presented itself again.

"Napoleon never ceased to lament to the last hour of his

life that the advice of Soult was not followed, who wished to take advantage of this concentration of five corps, in all ninety thousand combatants, in the valley of the Tagus, and march at once on Coria and Lisbon. Soon after, he dismissed Jourdan from his situation of major-general to Joseph, and conferred that important situation on Soult."

While a period of general inaction succeeded the affair at Banos, events of some moment, in a military and political view, were occurring. Wellesley was appointed camp-marshal of the Spanish armies, honoured by a flattering address, and presented with some valuable horses by the central Junta. The latter, with the address, he accepted, and also the nomination of captain-general—subject, nevertheless, to the consent of his own sovereign—but the pay and emoluments attached to the appointment, he firmly and respectfully declined.

Two official changes simultaneously occurred—and it is difficult to say which was the more loudly called for.

Mr. Frere, after perpetrating an infinity of mischief, was at last recalled, and the Marquess of Wellesley sent out to supersede him. The brother of the victor of Talavera was enthusiastically welcomed in the Peninsula; his landing was marked by every token of satisfaction; and at Cadiz and Seville his reception was ardent, encouraging—and delusive. A very short time served to show that Spanish gratitude was confined to empty professions; "and the first despatches from Sir Arthur opened to him a disheartening prospect."

The other event of moment, was the forced resignation of Cuesta. His atrocious misconduct, even a Spanish Junta could not overlook—and Frere himself memorialised for his removal. A paralysis in one leg formed a fitting plea on which to ground a resignation; and when Lord Wellesley had notified, through Garay, to the Government, that all relations and mutual support must end between the British and Spanish armies unless Cuesta was dismissed, the latter obtained permission to retire to the baths of Alhama, and Eguia, the next in seniority, was nominated to the chief command.

But "Lord Wellesley had arrived too late; all the mischief that petulance, folly, bad faith, violence, and ignorance united, could inflict, was already accomplished; and while he was vainly urging a vile, if not a treacherous Government to provide sustenance for the soldiers, Sir Arthur withdrew the latter from a post where the vultures, in their prescience of death, were already congregating."

The British head-quarters were accordingly removed to Merida, while the light brigade fell back on Valencia de Alcantara. These movements sufficiently evinced Sir Arthur Wellesley's determination to retire his army from a country which, after all the devotion and successes of their allies, had been found superlatively ungrateful. That decision had due effect. The Junta was astounded ; the people trembled for the consequences ; and all were in dismay. Too late, promises were held out that the wants of the army should be supplied, as specious as any which had been plighted, and with no better certainty of being realised. The earnestness with which the Junta expressed their terror, and the strong assurances they offered of an ardent and an honest support, induced Lord Wellesley to suggest to his brother the necessity of his reconsidering how far an instant retreat into Portugal would be judicious. But Sir Arthur was not to be betrayed again by hollow professions ; and although he consented to halt a few days at Merida, where he could obtain supplies for his army, and give time for the popular ferment to abate, he peremptorily refused to take up the line of the Guadiana, or co-operate with the Spanish armies again. He justly observed, that the line of the Tagus, where Eguia was posted, was so particularly strong, that if the Spaniards could maintain themselves at all, there was the place they could most easily effect it. Sir Arthur concluded by promising to occupy the frontier, hang upon the enemy's flanks, and prevent him, unless he came in great force, from passing the Guadiana. These reasons would have satisfied Lord Wellesley that his brother's judgment was correct, had not other circumstances already done so.

Cuesta's rear-guard was but a short distance from the town when the French pickets appeared upon the heights above it ; and soon after, Victor, in person, rode into Talavera. He found the Plaza covered with the dead and dying—British, intermingled with French soldiers—and all indiscriminately abandoned, without shelter, food, or water, to perish in lingering torments. From a generous enemy these wretched men experienced a sympathy which their heartless allies had refused them.

"After complimenting the English, and observing that they understood the laws and courtesies of war, he told them there was one thing which they did not understand, and that was, how to deal with the Spaniards. He then sent soldiers to every house, with orders to the inhabitants immediately to receive

and accommodate the wounded of the two nations, who were lodged together—one English and one Frenchman ; and he expressly directed that the Englishman should always be served first.

"Many had already died in the square, and the stones were covered with blood : Victor ordered the townsmen to come with spades and besoms, remove and bury the dead, and cleanse the Plaza ; he was speedily obeyed, and then the French said the place was fit for them to walk in."

Immediately after the dead had been interred, and the wounded comfortably lodged, the French marshal proceeded to ascertain and appropriate the supplies which Talavera contained. A town, that could barely afford from day to day half rations to the English, was found to be actually overstocked with provisions, and had a sufficiency of corn to feed the French armies for months to come. Much as the violation of private property is to be censured and regretted, from whomsoever they might look for sympathy, the inhabitants of Talavera had no right, certainly, to claim it from their British allies.

It was full time, indeed, for the British general to remove his troops. Regiments, a few weeks before, capable of exertions that were never equalled during the remainder of the Peninsular contest, were now unable to get through an ordinary march ; and not only in numbers, but in strength, Sir Arthur was miserably reduced. "The handful of troops whom he now commanded, was composed of second battalions—of mere youths, both officers and men—made certainly of different stuff, and inferior in stamina to those whom Sir John Moore had led. Indeed, the Guards, the Buffs, the 48th, and 61st, with the light division which had lately joined, under Craufurd, were the only portions of the army which, at other periods, would have been regarded as fit for active service. Of the cavalry, again, it is impossible to speak in higher terms. They were dropping off daily ; and both men and horses suffered from sickness, to a degree even more appalling than that which befel the infantry."

Such was the state to which an army was reduced, which, a few weeks before, had crossed the frontier full of life, and hope, and enterprise. Now, one half of the soldiery were fitter for the hospital than the field ; and Wellesley was threatened on every side by an enemy four times his own number, and adding daily to their strength and general efficiency. As if nothing should be wanting to complete the embarrassment of the English commander, victory had crowned

the French arms with success. Austria was once more prostrate at the feet of Napoleon ; and the conquerors of Wagram, would, there was little doubt, soon be marching on the Pyrenees. It was also ascertained that the enemy were active in their preparations to enter Portugal by Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida ; and, if the attempt were made, it was doubtful whether it could be resisted.

But Wellesley did not despair. He had already expressed a confidence, that, if driven from Spain, he could still maintain himself in Portugal—"and into Portugal he prepared to remove, where, in comfortable cantonments, the health of his sick might be restored, and the strength of his weary and convalescents recruited." With him, to decide and act were synonymous. The order was given, and, in five marches, the British army leisurely fell back, took up the line of the Guadiana, and head-quarters were established at Badajoz.

That Sir Arthur Wellesley should feel and dread the responsibility attached to his command, was only what any officer must do who acted as he did, solely from his own decisions ; and the peculiar temper and circumstances of the times, besides, rendered his position one of fearful insecurity. His situation was singularly and painfully anomalous ; unexampled success had brought him but closer to the brink of a precipice ; and a splendid victory actually drew down upon the conqueror a torrent of obloquy and misrepresentation. The rabid abuse of factious demagogues at home, Wellesley might have despised and disregarded ; but where the injured were ever taught to seek for justice—where, as it might have been expected, he could have boldly demanded the meed of approbation his high deserts had merited—even there, within the walls of the British senate-house, his actions were misstated, his motives impugned, and his professional abilities impertinently questioned and coarsely undervalued. No wonder, then, that he refused to prolong a contest within the Spanish frontier, in which success could obtain no gratitude, and failure would be certain to entail disgrace.

To the Ministry at home, and, indeed, to all who would dispassionately consider the causes and necessities which influenced his conduct, Sir Arthur Wellesley's reasoning was conclusive, and it was gratifying to the victor of Talavera to know that in the highest quarter his services were properly appreciated. On receiving official intelligence of Joseph Buona-

parte's defeat, the king raised Sir Arthur to the peerage, and created him Baron Douro of Wellesley and Viscount Wellington of Talavera, and of Wellington, in the county of Somerset.

England was at this time in a state of feverish excitement, which never had been exhibited at any former period so violently, since the French Revolution had first convulsed the Continent. Party was carried to a height scarcely to be credited,—every day seemed "big with the fate of empires," and every hour produced some startling change. All political relations were marked by an uncertainty, so that none could count upon their duration for an hour; and all connected with the Government, held office by a tenure which the news of the next courier might destroy. Indeed, it would have been difficult to determine, whether at home or abroad, affairs were most turbulent, perilous, and insecure.

Many untoward events had shaken the stability of the Government, and rendered it so unpopular, that its dissolution was momently to be dreaded. The inquiry into the conduct of the Duke of York, which induced him to resign the command-in-chief of the army; the fatal expedition to Walcheren; the secession of Lord Castlereagh and Mr. Canning from the Cabinet, whose talents had been its main support; all strengthened the power of the Opposition, and their attacks on Ministers became daily more virulent and determined. The Peninsular expedition was by them made a *pendant* to that of Walcheren; and the honours conferred upon Lord Wellington, and a subsequent recommendation to attach a pension to support the dignity, produced discussions, which, from the obstinacy and violence with which they were maintained, rendered the opening session of 1810 memorable indeed.

The king's message recommended that a pension of £2,000 should be settled upon Lord Wellington, and the two next heirs to his title in succession. "With the grant of the peerage," Mr. Calcraft said, "that House had nothing to do; he was sorry it had been conferred; but though there was no remedy for it, the House ought not to add to it the pension. Pensions and thanks might be voted, but they could not permanently blind the country. Whatever the public opinion might be now, it would not be with Ministers upon this subject a month hence, when the whole fruits of Lord Wellington's victories and campaigns would develop themselves to public view. It was mournful and alarming to hear that

Lord Wellington had said that he could defend Portugal with 50,000 men, provided 30,000 of them were British ; for if the French were in earnest in their designs upon that country, before three months, Lord Wellington and his army would be in England. Neither Portugal, nor any other country, could be defended by victories like that of Talavera."

The policy of continuing the war in Spain—the value of the victory of Talavera—the ability with which the past campaign had been conducted—and the claims Lord Wellington had justly established to the honours he had received, were ably defended by Perceval, Wilberforce, and Canning, in the Commons. In the Lords, a manlier course had been taken by the Opposition ; and while Ministers were bitterly attacked, the Whig leaders bore honourable testimony to the glory gained by Britain in the Peninsula.

It has been happily observed by the ablest historian of the day, that, "in a determination to risk at once his popularity, military renown, and chances of glory, rather than either abandon his duty, or deviate from the plan by which he saw it could alone be discharged, the brightest page in the career of Wellington is to be found ;" and, it might be added, that none but a master spirit would have dared to hope aught from a cause which seemed so utterly destroyed. What was the summary of Spanish history ?—"Town after town was taken—army after army dispersed—every battle a defeat—and every defeat sensibly diminishing the heat of resistance." Spain, in point of fact, was already gasping at the foot of Napoleon—and Britain wellnigh exhausted by the immensity of her own efforts. Relieved by his alliance with Austria, he could turn with safety his enormous masses from the Rhine to the Tagus ; and what should prevent the fulfilment of his oft-repeated threat, that "he would drive the leopards to the sea ?"

And so most men thought—and few there were who did not yield to despondency. One, however, did not despair—and he was WELLINGTON !

CHAPTER X

THE period when Lord Wellington took up the line of the Guadiana, was among the gloomiest epochs of British history since the accession of the reigning monarch. Napoleon's glory had reached its zenith, and Europe had striven in vain to arrest

his march of victory. The proudest nations in their turn had suffered humiliating defeats ; and the power of Prussia, Russia, and Austria were humbled to the dust. It is true that in the Peninsula the struggle was still feebly maintained ; but it seemed a contest continued after hope was ended—a parting effort, which, like an expiring flame, the breath of the conqueror of Wagram could extinguish when he pleased.

The cantonments of the British army were selected for their general conveniency ; and where the soldiers could be best supplied, and the cavalry obtain forage, the different brigades were quartered. In autumn, the insalubrity of Estremadura is proverbial : fevers and agues prevail ; and men already severely visited by dysentery, were exposed to a worse disease, which, from its virulence, threatened to produce more calamitous results even than the sword itself. From its ravages no class was excepted : the soldier and his officer suffered in common ; and the iron frame of that chief, which had endured an Indian sun and borne the rigors of a Belgian winter, yielded for a season to the pestilential influence of this unhealthy province. For two days Lord Wellington was unable to keep the saddle ; and —a most unusual thing for him to do—while the army was retiring from Jaraicejo to Badajoz, he travelled in a carriage. At head-quarters he was slightly indisposed again, but he rallied speedily ; and, fortunately for the cause of Europe, combated and conquered a malady, under which the youngest and the hardiest had sunk.

But the inaction of winter quarters to Lord Wellington brought "no day of rest." The duties of his bureau were manifold and laborious ; and the few hours he could steal from the confinement an extensive correspondence required, were devoted to field sports, or consumed in visiting his hospitals. Early in October he set out for Lisbon ; and the object of that journey engrossed the undivided attention of the army. The general belief was, that its final departure from the Peninsula was an event not distant ; and, indeed, all circumstances tended to strengthen this opinion. The melancholy state to which sickness had reduced the English battalions,—the proven worthlessness of their Spanish allies—the astounding successes which had attended the arms of Napoleon, and placed the ascendancy of France upon a pinnacle of strength it had never reached before ; while his union with "a daughter of the Cæsars," to all appearance had established its solidity,—all these things denoted that the abandonment of Portugal was an inevitable

event, and that an army, brave and successful in every previous trial, must of necessity yield to a power no longer to be opposed, and decline further contest with a nation "emerged victorious from eighteen years of warfare."

Such were the speculations which Lord Wellington's absence from head-quarters had occasioned; but none could be more erroneous. Instead of preparations for an embarkation he was devising measures for holding the country to the last; and, with a singular prescience of events, employed in a personal examination of the ground, on which he afterwards gave a fatal check to the progress of French conquest. To plan the lines of Torres Vedras had been the object of his journey; and the ability that designed these extensive defences, was only equalled by the promptness with which they were executed. If the architect of St. Paul's trusted for immortality to his works, Wellington might have safely rested a soldier's fame on his; for "neither the Roman in ancient, nor Napoleon in modern times, have left such a monument of their power and perseverance."

The sickness in the British army so rapidly increased, that the average amount of deaths exceeded nine hundred monthly. The malady of the country required that wine and spirits should be liberally administered; and, unfortunately, the quantity which the commissariat could procure was unequal to the demand, and irregularly issued;—and bark, a specific in intermittent fever, was not to be obtained.

The wounded recovered quickly,—but the hospitals at Elvas and Estremos were crowded with the sick. Happily the season changed—the weather became cold and frosty. Clothing and supplies reached the British cantonments; and in the middle of December Wellington quitted his unhealthy quarters, and, crossing the Tagus, directed his march upon the Mondego.

This change in the position of the army was attended with the best results; and those who had survived the malaria of Estremadura, felt the influence of a healthier climate, and recovered rapidly. Convalescents from the hospitals joined their regiments in large numbers; and though the *morale* of the army had deteriorated, every day its health improved, and its general efficiency was re-established.

Meantime, the storm which had been long gathering, was about to burst in all its fury. Napoleon had already put an immense force in motion. One hundred and twenty thousand men of the Army of the Rhine had crossed the Pyrenees; 20,000 of the Imperial Guard were marching on the Bidassoa; a corps of

Poles and Italians had entered Catalonia, and a powerful siege-train, and nearly 800 carriages with stores and ammunition, were moving by the Burgos road. The grand total of the French army actually within the Pyrenees, amounted to 365,000 men. From the *élite* of this enormous force, two grand armies were formed, each comprising three distinct corps. The first, under the command of the Duke of Dalmatia, was composed of the corps of Victor, Mortier, and Sebastiani, with a reserve under General Dessoles. The second comprised the corps of Ney, Junot, and part of Victor's, and was especially intended to be employed by the Prince of Essling. The first *corps d'armée*, collected at the foot of the Sierra Morena, mustered 65,000 men, and was intended to overrun Andalusia. The second, concentrated in the valley of the Tagus, amounted to 80,000 effective soldiers, and was destined to reduce Ciudad Rodrigo in the onset, and finally to expel the English from Portugal, and thus achieve the conquest of the Peninsula.

On January 20th, the French army, nominally commanded by Joseph Buonaparte, crossed the Sierra Morena nearly unopposed, and united at Carolina on the southern side. The passes, by which they forced a barrier that was considered impenetrable, might have been held by a few battalions; but, as usual, the Spaniards were found wanting. The Puerto del Rey was carried by Dessoles at the first charge; and the Despinas Perros was immediately abandoned, when the light troops of Gazan were seen extending right and left, and commencing an ascent of the mountain. Sebastiani was equally successful. By Villa Nueva de los Infantes he effected an easy passage, and thus gained the upper valley of the Guadalquiver.

Soult marched rapidly on Cordova and Seville; Sebastiani on Jaen and Granada. Jaen, which had boasted of its preparations for defence, where six and forty pieces of cannon had been mounted, and military stores laid in to resist a siege, "submitted as tamely as the most defenceless village. Granada, also, where a crusade had been preached, was entered without resistance." Pressing on, Sebastiani overcame the desultory resistance he received from peasants led on by priests; for Ariezega had been a second time defeated, and the remnant of an army, already beaten, was once more totally disbanded.

Sebastiani's success having secured the left flank of the French armies, the right and centre, under Joseph, marched upon Cordova, where they were received without an indication of hostility. This circumstance is the more remarkable, as the

town had actually seven thousand troops within its walls ; and the people were anxious to resist—but leaders were wanting ; and a city, having a fine cannon foundry, and "immense arsenals," fell without a blow. The inhabitants of Seville yielded their city on the 31st, and on February 1st, Joseph Buonaparte entered it at the head of his guards.

To Sebastiani, Malaga offered a bold but ineffectual resistance. The charges of Milhaud's heavy cavalry were not to be repelled by the armed townsmen who attempted its defence ; and Malaga shared the fate of the other places which had already submitted without a struggle.

But one conquest was required to end the tale of Peninsular resistance. Cadiz was unprovided for an attack—for on the Isla de Leon there was not a thousand men ; nor were the works even in a condition to resist, had there been a sufficiency of troops to man them. The Junta, to avoid the consequences a popular ferment had produced, fled from Seville to that city, having, by their expiring efforts, done all within their power to conclude the ruin of the kingdom. Albuquerque had been kept inoperative ; for the orders he received in the morning were countermanded before noon ; and the contradictory views of the Junta paralysed his exertions, while they were fatal presages of their own approaching dissolution.

Convinced, however, that with the passage of the Morena, the fate of Seville was sealed, Albuquerque saw that the last chance of Spain lay in the preservation of Cadiz—and taking a serious responsibility on himself, with a part of his corps, amounting to 8,000 infantry, and 500 horse, he marched to the relief of the only hope of Spain—Cadiz.

On this occasion the French forfeited their high reputation for marching. Albuquerque, by an extraordinary effort, reached Cadiz on the evening of February 2nd, and broke down the Zuazo bridge, which crosses the canal and divides the Isla de Leon from the Continent. The struggle to gain the city was a close one ; for Victor's advanced guard had already appeared at Chiclana, and on the next morning his columns had come up, and occupied the Andalusian side of the canal.

What will not a hour or two effect in war ! Albuquerque had scarcely entered the city, when volunteers flocked in, deserters rejoined their colours, and in three days his force exceeded 13,000 fighting men ; and that force was confirmed in its determination to resist by the opportune arrival of 5,000 Anglo-Portuguese troops. A British squadron was riding in

the bay—England had sent assurances of further support—and thus encouraged, Cadiz determined to hold out, and her defence was what a gallant one deserved to be—successful.

At this period, Massena's appointment to the command of the army destined for the conquest of Portugal was officially communicated. The report had been rife for months that Napoleon himself would "drive the leopard to the sea,"—but other objects engrossed him. Wearied with the disputes and jealousies which had distracted his lieutenants, the French Emperor selected one superior to them all, both in rank and character. "No general in the French service had enjoyed so high a reputation since Hoche, and Pichegru, and Moreau had disappeared; Buonaparte, in his first campaigns, called him, in his own inflated language, 'the favourite child of Victory,' and after the late Austrian war, created him Prince of Essling, because his skill and exertions had contributed mainly to the escape of the French from utter destruction at the battle of Aspern." With increased powers, Massena assumed his new command, "and, as Soult had done before him, it is believed that he went to make the conquest of Portugal, expecting to be rewarded with its crown for his success." Such was the adversary to whom Wellington was opposed—the victor in an hundred fields, and who, among the best soldiers of the age, might then have fearlessly appended the motto to his name, of *nulli secundus*.

Massena's appointment seemed to be the signal for hostilities to commence. On April 25th a French corps encamped on the Pedro Toro, a height three miles eastward of Rodrigo. On the 30th a second division bivouacked a league to the north, on the Valde Carras, and a third division took ground between them. In the middle of May a fourth division encamped on Monte de Ibaurey, to the westward; and on June 4th Rodrigo was regularly invested.

"Ciudad Rodrigo is built on a rising ground, on the right bank of the Agueda, and has a double *enceinte* all round it. The interior wall is of an old construction, of the height of thirty-two feet, and is generally of bad masonry, without flanks, and with weak parapets and narrow ramparts. The exterior enclosure is a modern *fausse-braie*, of a low profile, constructed so far down the slope of the hill as to afford but little cover to the interior wall; and from the same defect of the rapid descent of the hill, the *fausse-braie* itself is very imperfectly covered by its glacis. On the eastern and southern sides there are ravelins

to the *fausse-braie*, but in no part is there a covered way, nor are there any countermines. Without the town, at the distance of three hundred yards, the suburbs were enclosed by a bad earthen entrenchment, hastily thrown up. The ground without the place is generally flat, and the soil rocky, except on the north side, where there are two hills called the upper and the lower Teson: the one at one hundred and eighty yards from the works rises nearly to the level of the ramparts, and the other at six hundred yards' distance to the height of thirteen feet above them. The soil on these hills is very stony, and during open weather in winter, water rises at the depth of six inches below the surface."

All doubt that Rodrigo was to be regularly besieged ended, when, on June 1st, Ney threw a trestle bridge over the Agueda, at Caridad—and, on the 5th, another across the river at Carboneras. With a garrison of 5,000 men, and a population of about the same extent, Andres Herrasti prepared to hold out; and the defence which the old man made proved him "every inch" a soldier.

No fortress was better defended, and none more furiously assailed—Ney "beginning his approaches, where a general more sparing of his army would have terminated them." But this reckless expenditure of human life proved unavailing; and when Massena, on June 24th, assumed the command of "the grand army of Portugal," he found, by dear-bought experience, that the mode of attack hitherto adopted must be changed, and recourse had to the slower, but more certain operations, which Ney in his ardour had overlooked.

On the 25th the French batteries, armed with forty-six pieces of siege artillery, opened and maintained an unabated fire until the evening of the 28th, when the breach being twenty-five yards long, and deemed practicable, Ney sent in a summons, desiring Herrasti to choose "between an honourable capitulation, and the terrible vengeance of a victorious army;" but the old governor returned a firm refusal.

During these occurrences no general was ever more painfully circumstanced than Lord Wellington. The salvos from Massena's guns sounded in the British camp, and the musketry was heard distinctly at the outposts. The city held nobly out. The spirit of the Catalans pervaded the inhabitants of Rodrigo; and sexual weakness and bodily infirmity were forgotten when duty made a call. To succour the besieged was, with Lord Wellington, the object next his heart. One march would bring

him to the city—and all expected that the attempt would be made. "The troops desired the enterprise—the Spaniards demanded it as a proof of good faith—the Portuguese, to keep the war away from their own country." Romana came specially from Badajoz to urge its necessity, and offer his co-operation. Massena, in his proclamations, taxed his opponent with timidity, and accused him of breach of honour and good faith in allowing his ally's fortresses to fall, "without risking a shot to save them." Nothing, however, could shake the determination of the English general. Views and objects which none could penetrate occupied his thoughts. The course that others urged he saw was madness. He might succeed in bringing off a raw garrison at the expense of twice their number of good soldiers, and the result would be the loss of Portugal. Stern in his purpose, Wellington remained inflexible; and to his resolution not to stand the issue of a battle, the downfall of Napoleon's dynasty may be traced.

The fate of Rodrigo was sealed; but the city held out until the 11th, when the counterscarp having been blown in, and a breach formed, over which carriages might have passed, and the French columns formed, and only awaiting the signal to assault, Herrasti hoisted the white flag and surrendered.

In the meantime the crisis of the campaign was fast approaching. Massena moved forward on Viseu, and Wellington retired by the left bank of the Mondego. Leaving Craufurd's division and the cavalry on the Criz, at Martagoa, the English general retired behind the Alva; and on September 22nd, the French concentrated at Viseu.

Massena's designs were speedily penetrated by Lord Wellington. The marshal's movements were evidently directed on Coimbra, by the north of the Mondego. Abandoning the line of the Zezere and the routes upon Abrantes, his march trended either to the Busaco or Murcella heights, over both of which the mountain roads north and south of the Mondego are carried.

"The Sierra de Busaco is a high ridge, which extends from the Mondego, in a northerly direction, about eight miles. At the highest point of the ridge, about two miles from its termination, is the convent and garden of Busaco. The Sierra de Busaco is connected by a mountainous tract of country with the Sierra de Caramula, which extends in a north-easterly direction beyond Viseu, and separates the valley of the Mondego from the valley of the Douro. On the left of the Mondego,

nearly in a line with the Sierra de Busaco, is another ridge of the same description, called the Sierra de Murcella, covered by the river Alva, and connected by other mountainous parts with the Sierra d'Estrella.

"All the roads to Coimbra, from the eastward, lead over the one or the other of these Sierras. They are very difficult for the passage of an army, the approaches to the top of the ridge on both sides being mountainous."

Massena's advance being now certain, and Reynier's corps, which had been opposite to that of Hill, in the valley of the Tagus, having moved rapidly towards the Mondego, obliged Hill to cross the river at Villa Velha, and unite himself with Wellington by the defile of Espinosa. On the 23rd the French passed the Criz in force, having repaired the bridges which Pack had destroyed on the preceding day; and the British leisurely retired.

Massena's advance was not accomplished without annoyance. In accordance with the orders issued by Lord Wellington, the country, on either bank of the Mondego, had been wasted, the mills rendered unserviceable, the villages deserted, and the inhabitants removed from their dwellings, and obliged to hide themselves in the mountains. The partisan leaders hung upon the flanks of the French army, and occasionally showed themselves in the rear; while, taking advantage of the badness of the road having delayed Massena's military chest and reserve artillery, Trant made a bold attempt to seize both; and had the Portuguese militia been more manageable, there is little doubt that his success would have been equal to his daring. As it was, he created much confusion, carried off an hundred prisoners, delayed the enemy two marches, and thus gave Wellington ample time, had that been necessary, to establish his detached brigades securely in their positions at Busaco.

The British army, during the night, lay in dense masses on the summit of the mountain. The sky was clear, and the dark rocky eminences rising on both sides of the pass, were crowned by the fires of innumerable bivouacs. The veterans in the English army, accustomed to similar scenes of excitement, slept profoundly on their stony beds; but many of the younger soldiers, who were now to witness a battle for the first time, were kept awake by the grandeur and solemnity of the scene around them. As the first streaks of dawn were beginning to appear over the eastern hills, a rustling noise

was heard in the wooded dells which ran up to the crest of the mountains. It arose from the French outposts, who, stealing unobserved during the night, had thus got close to the outposts of the English position without being perceived. The alarm was instantly given, and the troops started to their arms at all points. It was full time, for in a few minutes more the French in two masses were upon them.

The French attack was made in five columns, and on two distinct points, about a league apart from each other. Reynier, with two columns, mounted the hill at Antonio de Cantara—and Ney, with three, in front of the convent of Busaco. Reynier had less difficulties to overcome, as the face of the Sierra by which he advanced was more practicable; and, favoured by the mist, his skirmishers were mingled with the light troops of the third division, almost as soon as the pickets had discovered that the enemy were in motion. The allies resisted vigorously, and the British artillery swept the face of the Sierra with a destructive storm of grape; but the French pressed forward, forced the right of the division back, threw a Portuguese regiment into disorder, and gained the crest of the ridge between Picton's and Leith's divisions. The enemy instantly endeavoured to secure the height they had won with their advanced battalions, and, with the remainder of the corps, pressed rapidly along the ridge of the hill. But in front, volleys of musketry checked them—their flank was torn by the fire of the British guns—while the 45th and 88th came forward with the bayonet, and, charging furiously, drove all before them, and forced the shattered column down the hill, "the dead and dying strewing the way even to the bottom of the valley."

The greater difficulty of the ground rendered Ney's attacks still less successful, even for a time, than Reynier's had proved. Craufurd's disposition of the light division was masterly. Under a dipping of the ground between the convent and plateau, the 43rd and 52nd were formed in line; while higher up the hill, and closer to the convent, the Germans were drawn up The rocks in front formed a natural battery for the guns; and the whole face of the Sierra was crowded with riflemen and Cacadores. As morning dawned, a sharp and scattered musketry was heard among the broken hollows of the valley that separated the rival armies, and immediately the French presented themselves in three divisions; Loison's mounting the face of the Sierra, Marchand's inclining leftwards, as if intending to turn

the right flank of the left division, and the third remaining in reserve.

"The brigade of General Simon led the attack ; and, reckless of the constant fusillade of the British light troops and the sweeping fire of the artillery, which literally ploughed through the advancing column from its leading to its last section, the enemy came steadily and quickly on. The horse artillery worked their guns with amazing rapidity—delivering round after round with such beautiful precision, that the wonder was, how any body of men could advance under such a withering and incessant cannonade. But nothing could surpass the gallantry of the assailants. On they came—and, in a few moments, their skirmishers, 'breathless and begrimed with powder,' topped the ridge of the Sierra. The British guns were instantly retired—the French cheers arose—and, in another second, their column topped the height.

"General Craufurd, who had coolly watched the progress of the advance, called on the 43rd and 52nd to 'Charge!' A cheer that pealed for miles over the Sierra answered the order, and 'eighteen hundred British bayonets went sparkling over the brow of the hill.' The head of the French column was overwhelmed in an instant ; 'both its flanks were lapped over by the English wings,' while volley after volley, at a few yards' distance, completed its destruction, and marked with hundreds of its dead and dying, all down the face of the Sierra, the course of its murderous discomfiture. Some of the light troops continued slaughtering the broken columns nearly to the bottom of the hill, until Ney's guns opened from the opposite side, and covered the escape of the relics of Simon's division."

When Simon's attack was finally repulsed, Marchand's brigade had gained a wood half-way up the Sierra, and threatened the centre of the position. But they never advanced beyond the cover of the pine-trees—Pack's Portuguese regiment held them firmly in check, the guards showed themselves in force on the crest of the height, while Craufurd, now disengaged, turned a searching fire from his guns upon their flank. Ney, in person, sustained this hopeless contest for an hour, and then retired in despair, leaving the British position as unassailable as it had been previous to the general attack.

The roar of battle ended ; and, beyond now and then a dropping shot, Busaco was undisturbed, and nothing indicated the recent conflict, but the melancholy tokens which mark "a

foughten field." In front of the light division, the hill was thickly covered with the dead and dying ; and permission was granted by Craufurd for the French to remove their wounded. That interval, honourable to the humanity of civilised warfare, was charitably employed on both sides ; and French and English intermingled with perfect confidence and good humour, each seeking and taking off their wounded men, and occasionally offering a mutual assistance.

But that friendly interval was brief. A village within pistol shot of the light division had been occupied by the French, and, on being desired to retire, they refused to obey the order. Craufurd was not to be trifled with ; a dozen guns were turned on the devoted village ; and when both houses and defenders were half demolished, a company of the 43rd descended from the position, and drove out the remnant of the occupants.

The contest at Busaco was never doubtful for a moment ; but where it was hottest, there Lord Wellington was found. When not personally engaged in directing movements, he communicated, from time to time, to the generals of divisions such changes as he considered necessary for their guidance. All had been ably conceived—all was happily executed—and, in the words of a staff officer,—"There was something exhilarating to a degree in the whole day of Busaco : as it advanced, a bright sun shone on the armies ; no event had occurred to counteract the full tide of success attending the defensive warfare adopted by Lord Wellington ; strength of position, with great firmness of purpose, had enabled the allies to repel very serious attacks with comparatively trifling loss ; and the glacis of the mountain-barrier on which they stood was heaped with bodies of the enemy."

The loss of life at Busaco, as might have been expected from the obstinacy with which the enemy continued gallant and unavailing efforts, was most severe ; but the casualties of the French and allied armies, relatively, bore no proportion. The strength of his position, and his being enabled to employ artillery with terrible effect, gave to the British general an advantage, of which he amply availed himself. Hence, of the enemy, six thousand put *hors de combat* cannot be over the amount. Of this number, about three hundred, including General Simon, three colonels, and thirty-three inferior officers, were made prisoners ; and nearly two thousand—for as the English buried the slain, they could form on this point a correct estimate—were left dead upon the battle-ground. Among the

killed was the French general, Graind'orge; and three generals of division, Merle, Loison, and Macune, were wounded. The entire casualties sustained by the allied army amounted to one thousand two hundred and sixty-nine, of whom seventy-four were officers of all ranks.

It was not, however, either in the physical loss or the abated pride which his victory inflicted upon Massena, that Wellington's advantage were comprised. The moral effect was far more important: for the first time, brought the Portuguese troops into action with the French, and under circumstances, too, that gave them a victory. "It may safely be affirmed that, owing to this battle, the strength of the Portuguese troops the day after the battle was doubled. The sight of this auspicious change dispelled any feeling from the British army. No presentiments of ultimate discomfiture were any longer entertained. The plan of defence which the far-seeing sagacity of their chief had formed, revealed itself to the meanest sentinel, and the troops of every nation prepared to follow the standard of their leader with that ready alacrity and undoubting confidence, which is at once the forerunner, and the cause of ultimate triumph."

That Massena should persevere in advancing farther into Portugal after the terrible lesson he had received on the Sierra of Busaco, was contrary to all military principles, and, consequently, induced Lord Wellington to believe that the French marshal would abandon the attempt, and fall back to the Spanish frontier. But whether irritated at his defeat, or urged forward by his necessities, the French marshal sought for and acquired information, which enabled him to turn the British position, and by the pass of Sardaô, gain the Oporto road. His feint of a renewed attack upon the 28th failed—for the flank movement of his opponent did not for a single moment escape the eagle glance of Wellington. Instantly abandoning his mountain position, the British general took the direct route on Torres Vedras, through Coimbra and Leyria, enforcing by every means within his power, the orders previously issued in his proclamation, which directed that the country should be wasted, and the towns deserted by their inhabitants, and left in desolate loneliness to the invaders.

"Generally, these orders were obeyed with a devotion that seems remarkable. Property was wasted or concealed—and the shrine and cottage, alike abandoned by their occupants —the peasant, deserting the hearth where he had been nursed—

the monk, the altar where he had worshipped from his boyhood These fugitives accompanied the army on its march,—and when it halted in the Lines, one portion of the wanderers proceeded to Lisbon, while the greater number crossed the Tagus, to seek on its southern shores, a temporary retreat from those who had obliged them to sacrifice their possessions, and fly from the dwellings of their fathers."

The regressive movement of the allied [illegible] was a military spectacle which had never been previously exhibited; and nothing could be more imposing, nor more strange. On October 1st, [illegible]ordinary scene, "the varieties of which, it presented an extremely to describe; but when it is explained it is impossible was absolutely and continuously covered during that whole extent, some idea may be formed as to its unusual aspect. It was not alone troops of all arms, attended by the encumbrances or followers of an army; it was not peasantry, removing with their families; it was not the higher orders of society, travelling conformably to their rank; it was not the furniture, grain, cattle, of an extensive line of country, passing from one station to another; but it was all these combined, pressing forward in one varied, confused, apparently interminable mass."

Everything considered, a retreat was never conducted in better order. The weather, until the infantry reached the Lines, was good. At Coimbra, Condeixa, Redinha and Leyria, the troops became troublesome, until at the latter place the mischief was so much increased, that "Lord Wellington arrested this growing disorder with a strong hand. Three men, taken in the act at Leyria, were hanged on the spot; and some regiments, whose discipline was more tainted than others, were forbidden to enter a village."

Ignorant respecting the strength of the position to which his opponent was retiring—and indifferent to the desperate resources on which he was about to entrust the existence of his army, the French marshal accelerated his march. Before him were impregnable lines—around him an exhausted country. Misled by the ignorance of traitors—blinded by those fortunes which had raised a peasant of Nice into a prince of that empire, which, for a time, had left all others in the shade, Massena dared his fate; and, like his master, he found by sad experience, that fortune, when too often pressed, terminates invariably in disaster and disgrace.

On the evening of October 8th the advanced guards of the

allies entered the Lines, and on the 16th, their posts were fully occupied—and now the secret labours of a year were about to recompense the skill and perseverance which, under every discouraging event, had brought an admirable commencement to a triumphant close.

Ignorant of the matchless position of his adversary, the Prince of Essling pressed blindly on, but already his rival was beyond his grasp ; while, in his rear, and on his flanks, a host of irregulars were swarming. In war, daring does much, but prudence does more—and Massena's campaign points that moral well.

CHAPTER XI

The experience of a few days showed Massena how very desperate his chances were of deforcing an enemy, who had been already tried on more assailable ground, and tried in vain. Before him, rose the Lines of Lisbon ; behind, his communications with the Spanish frontier were cut off ; Bacellar's army was spread over the country, and every post the Prince of Essling quitted was immediately occupied by Portuguese irregulars. In three days after he had established his hospitals in Coimbra, that city was surprised by Trant, and five thousand sick and wounded men, with the marine company that guarded them, were captured, and carried to Oporto. British gun-boats filled the Tagus ; supplies came freely to the allied camp ; for the sea to them was open, and their intercourse with the capital was uninterrupted and direct. People flocked from Lisbon to visit the lines, in all that security which told the ruin of Napoleon's hopes—and with winter coming fast—an exhausted country to depend on—increasing sickness—disunited officers, and a disheartened soldiery, Massena felt his situation to be one, than which nothing could be more discouraging ; for to attack were madness—to retreat, disgraceful—and to remain, impossible. Contrary, however, to every principle of war, the marshal desperately persevered, and for six weeks maintained sixty thousand men and twenty thousand horses, in a country which could not have supplied a British brigade for a week.

Never was the misconduct of the Portuguese Government more censurable, than in the apathy which they had evinced in carrying out the measures Lord Wellington had so emphatically recommended ; and, in writing to Mr. Stuart,

the British general warmly expressed the displeasure it had occasioned :

"Your note of the 29th is strictly true in all its parts. The French could not have stayed here a week if the provisions had been removed ; and the length of time they can now stay depends upon the quantity remaining of what they have found in places from which there existed means of removing everything, if the quantity had been ten times greater. They are stopped effectually in front ; all the roads are occupied; and they can get nothing from their rear ; but all the military arrangements are useless, if they can find subsistence on the ground which they occupy.

"For aught I know to the contrary, they may be able to maintain their position till the whole French army is brought to their assistance. It is heart-breaking to contemplate the chance of failure from such obstinacy and folly."

Never did the circumstances of the times, nor the character of the army to which he was opposed, render, for the security of Lord Wellington, a stern obedience to the spirit of his proclamation so indispensable. It is true that the position of the allied army was everything but impregnable ; but an unforeseen omission—an untoward event—one of those thousand accidents to which war is subject, might, when the gates of success were apparently completely closed, have opened them unexpectedly to a persevering enemy. The only chances of Massena depended on delay, and those who called themselves the allies of Wellington, gave them to him. No soldiers in the world were better able to turn them to account ; and never did the French army exhibit the singular capability of supporting itself, when others would have perished, more strongly than Massena's before the Lines of Lisbon. There, indeed, the theory of their discipline was practically illustrated, and Napoleon's favourite principle carried out, of making "war support war." The following graphic picture of their predatory superiority is thus given by an English historian : "Nothing escaped their search. The French soldiers had been so long accustomed to plunder, that they proceeded in their researches for booty of every kind upon a regular system. They were provided with tools for the work of pillage, and every piece of furniture in which places of concealment could be constructed, they broke open from behind, so that no valuables could be hidden from them by any contrivance of that kind. Having satisfied themselves that nothing was secreted above

ground, they proceeded to examine whether there was any new masonry, or if any part of the cellar or ground-floor had been disturbed ; if it appeared uneven, they dug there ; where there was no such indication, they poured water, and if it were absorbed in one place faster than another, there they broke the earth. There were men, who, at the first glance, could pronounce whether anything had been buried beneath the soil ; and when they probed with an iron rod, or, in default of it, with sword or bayonet, it was found that they were seldom mistaken in their judgment. The habit of living by prey called forth, as in beasts, a faculty of discovering it. There was one soldier whose scent became so acute, that, if he approached a place where wine had been concealed, he would go unerringly to the spot."

The war had now assumed an unwonted character ; and the question was not how to fight, but how to live. If the Prince of Essling could but obtain supplies, and remain in front of a position, which a careful reconnaissance convinced him that he could neither turn nor carry, some masterly diversion of Napoleon might still enable him to succeed ; while Wellington, with admirable judgment, declined active measures, and trusted to starvation. Massena "spread his movable columns in the rear to seek for provisions, and commenced forming magazines at Santarem, where his principal depôt was established ; but Wellington drew down all the militia and ordenanza of the north on the French rear, putting their right in communication with the garrison of Peniché, and their left with the militia of Lower Beira. To strengthen the latter, he prevailed on Carlos d'Espana to cross the Tagus, and act between Castello Branco and Abrantes ; and thus the French were completely enclosed, without any weakening of the regular army."

While Lord Wellington was thus pursuing a slow but certain policy, everything seemed as if united to embarrass it. In the country, Souza, assisted by the patriarch, warped the Regency to what purposes he pleased, and the fruits which the intrigues of the president and priest occasioned, soon produced unequivocal results. From the Portuguese line, the desertions within nine months amounted to as many thousands, while the ordenanza disbanded themselves by whole companies. Famine threatened Lisbon, crowded as it was with fugitives from the country, and prisoners who had been suffered to accumulate. The fortification of the heights of Almeida, which

the British engineers had recommended to be immediately completed, was seized on as a pretext for the patriarch to make a popular remonstrance ; and the influence which he possessed over an ignorant and bigoted community, was dangerously exercised to mar the efforts of their deliverer, and cause the British Cabinet to be suspected and maligned.

Nor were the home relations of Lord Wellington more encouraging. There never was a stronger instance of that wilful blindness and profligate contempt of truth, which the virulence of party too frequently produces, than the ignorance and falsity which teemed in England from the Opposition press. According to their assertions, Massena was blessed with abundance, and Wellington reduced to actual extremity. The humanity which induced the latter to recommend to the benevolence of the British nation that portion of the Portuguese population, who, in obedience to his mandate, had abandoned their homes and sacrificed their property, was used by the journalists of the day as a means of arming Wellington with "a starving multitude," a force for him to maintain. The Prince of Essling, as they averred, had "an immense track of country as yet untouched," from which to obtain supplies ; and the allies, with famine in their rear, and an overwhelming enemy in their front, possessed the ground alone which was crowned by their artillery or occupied by their battalions. It was hoped—so said the newspapers—that Wellington would not dream of remaining throughout the winter on those barren heights ; he might probably still embark his army with but little loss,—and the sooner it was effected, the better.

But how very different were the relative situations of the armies now opposed ! By personal observation the Prince of Essling was convinced that his rival's position was unassailable, and he accordingly rejected Junot's proposition of hazarding an attack upon the great redoubt, as a wild and dangerous experiment. Indeed, he was seriously embarrassed, for, contrary to Ney's remonstrances, he had obstinately sat down before Lines against which all military considerations should have deterred him from advancing. The reconnaissance he had made produced only loss of life, and confirmed previous suspicions that any efforts to deforce the allies were hopeless. All that remained for "the spoiled child of victory" was to communicate his situation to Napoleon, explain his difficulties, and demand further assistance and advice. General Foy was accordingly despatched to Paris—and Massena endeavoured to await the

issue of his mission, and maintain his army as he best could in front of the Lines of Lisbon.

Every hour his situation became more unpromising,—for as the supplies grew scarcer, the difficulty to obtain them proportionately increased, and there was not a point on which Massena could move his foragers without encountering an enemy. Carlos d'Espana had interrupted all communications between Castello Branco and Abrantes. Some Spanish light troops and British cavalry were at Ramalhal. In Obidos, a daring partisan (Fenwick) had a force. Waters, with indefatigable activity, was cutting off marauding parties. Near the lines, Wilson infested the country from Espinhal to the Zezere ; and every day proved that Wellington's assurances to Lord Liverpool were hurrying with rapidity to their accomplishment. "But war is a curious and complicated web ; and while the purely mititary part was thus happily situated and strong, the political part was one of weakness and alarm."

The precarious resources of the enemy exposed them to the severest privations ; even French ingenuity failed in discovering concealed magazines ; for in fact, the country contained none. Hunger, cold, and fatigue, produced disease. As the season advanced, Massena's army became more sickly and more dispirited ; and every deserter who passed the British outposts, described the situation of the French soldiery as deplorable.

On the other hand, within the Lines neither scarcity was felt, nor danger apprehended. "Nor was Lord Wellington inattentive to the comforts, and even luxuries of his followers. Provisions were abundant ; there was no want of wine ; and sports and amusements went on as if we had been, not at the seat of war, but in England. Officers of all ranks, and in every department, from the commander-in-chief down to the regimental subaltern, occasionally enjoyed the field-sports of hunting, shooting, and fishing. The men, too, had their pastimes, when not employed on duty ; in a word, seldom has an army, occupying ground in the face of its enemy, enjoyed so many hours of relaxation, or contrived to unite so completely the pleasures of country life with the serious business of war. It is probably needless to add, that so great a show of security in their leader had the best possible effect upon the temper of the troops ; or that the *morale* of the army was sustained, not more by a contemplation of things as they really were, than by a conviction that they must be going on prosperously, otherwise so much relaxation could not abound."

In the meanwhile the conduct of the Regency became more intolerable ; and they acted as if their object was to support and not distress the enemy. Unfortunately an old decree of the Prince Regent was extant, which encouraged private disclosures to be made against persons suspected of disaffection towards the Government, with a guarantee of secrecy as to the informant. This system had been infamously resorted to ; nightly arrests were made by order of the patriarch and his confederates, and forty-eight persons were torn from their families and homes, and thrown into the Limœira among thieves and murderers, or placed *au secret* in the tower of St. Julian. This atrocious proceeding aroused the indignation of the inhabitants of Lisbon to a pitch of fury, which, with all the mob popularity he had acquired, the patriarch dreaded to encounter ; and to shelter himself from its effects, he and his party basely insinuated that they had acted in accordance with Lord Wellington's advice. There never was a priest more anxious to intermeddle with state policy, and never was there one more incompetent than the patriarch ; for he wanted the first requisites—discretion and common temper. In despite of his intrigues, the court of the Brazils subsequently confirmed the authority of Lord Wellington. The British ambassador and Admiral Berkeley were added to the regency—some tools of the patriarch were displaced—honester men succeeded—and, armed with an authority that rarely has been granted to an individual, to use the strong language of Colonel Napier, Wellington "grasped the whole power of Portugal with one hand, while he kept the power of France at bay with the other."

While Lord Wellington was thus engaged in crushing a corrupt administration abroad, the event he had predicted was accomplished, and Massena, abandoning his position, retired from before the British Lines. If, as all must admit, he had committed a serious error in making an imprudent advance, his retreat was worthy of his former reputation—and illustrated in a striking degree, those military qualities which Napoleon affirmed that Massena so eminently possessed.

His operations were effected with extraordinary secrecy—and they were so ably planned, that they tended to encourage a belief that the Prince of Essling was preparing to resume the offensive, rather than to recede from the position he had so long and so uselessly blockaded.

Having previously despatched his hospitals and heavy baggage

to Santarem, repaired the bridge over the Zezere at Punhete, which had been swept away by the floods, and constructed a second one at Martinchel, he despatched strong detachments to Pombal, while the cavalry of Montbrun patrolled the country towards Leyria. The sixth corps was removed to Thomar, and Loison, reinforced with a brigade of dragoons, marched to Golegao.

As there was a dangerous defile in the rear of Alemquer, to retire the eighth corps from before the Lines was a difficult operation, the whole position being domineered by the Monte Agraca. The movement was accordingly made during the night ; and when the mists slowly cleared away on the morning of November 15th, the huts which the French division had occupied were found abandoned. At dusk, Clausel had removed his posts, and, covered by a strong rear-guard, cleared the defile without molestation ; while Solignac, taking the route to Santarem, retired by the royal causeway from Alhandra—the eighth corps marching on Torres Novas, the second halting at Santarem.

The French retreat was now clearly ascertained to have been a decided and well-concerted operation,—and in the belief that Massena intended to cross the Zezere by his bridges, and abandon Portugal altogether, Hill's corps was ordered across the Tagus, to move in that case on Abrantes, while Wellington himself, supposing that Santarem was merely occupied by a rear-guard, determined to force that position.

Fortunately, a part of the artillery had not arrived ; and, although the dispositions were in everything besides complete, he waited for the arrival of the guns. That pause was fortunate ; and the eagle glance of Wellington detected appearances that bespoke preparations for a determined stand. It was evident that the position would be obstinately maintained. "Every advantageous spot of ground was fully occupied ; the most advanced sentinels boldly returned the fire of the skirmishers ; large bodies of reserve were descried, some in arms, others cooking ; the strokes of the hatchet, and the fall of trees, resounded from the woods clothing the hills ; and the commencement of a triple line of abatis, and the fresh earth of entrenchments, were discernible in many places.

Lord Wellington was convinced by the observations he made upon the following day, that the system he had himself pursued was now ably resorted to by his rival. Massena had the same advantages at Santarem, that Wellington had possessed at Torres Vedras ; and as flank movements were impracticable—the routes

being so broken up during winter, as to render the manœuvring of heavy masses an impossibility—the British general determined to canton his troops, and patiently abide the issue.

To prevent any sudden outbreak from Santarem, the light division, supported by a cavalry brigade, were posted on the heights which overlooked the marshes that surround the place; and the causeway—by which alone Massena could move troops forward—was secured by mining the bridge at its extremity, fortifying the hill that commanded it, and forming an entrenchment sufficient to contain a regiment. To the left of Valle, a chain of posts extended by Malhorquija along a range of hills to Rio Mayor; Anson's cavalry watched the roads from Pernes and Alcanhede, and a division of infantry held an intrenched position at Alcoentre—thus effectually securing the approaches to the lines from Monte Junta to the Tagus.

Massena, in the meantime, had permanently fixed his headquarters at Torres Novas, fortified Punhete in his rear, and thus secured his bridge upon the Zezere. His front was safe while the rains continued—a flooded country affording a sufficient protection. This position had every advantage, as his troops were well in hand, and on several points that of his opponent was vulnerable. He had also two lines open for retreating, by which, at the same time, he could communicate with the Spanish frontier, and cover the advance of any troops or supplies which might be forwarded from the rear. He knew that a convoy was on its march, and he was apprised that strong reinforcements, including the ninth corps under Drouet, might be hourly expected. Lastly, he could avail himself of assistance from the French army in Andalusia; while an extensive tract of country, which unfortunately had been but partially wasted by its inhabitants, afforded an ample field over which his marauding parties might range, and thus enable him to await Foy's return with orders from the emperor, and receive the immense additions to his *corps d'armée*, which he had good reason to believe were already in march to join him.

Political considerations, added to a soldier's pride, were sufficient inducements to keep Massena in Portugal so long as he could subsist himself. While he held a position in the country, none could say that Lisbon was secure, or that Oporto was not open to aggression. The occupation of a portion of the kingdom increased the sufferings of a starving population, fostered discontent, encouraged disaffection, and

gave reason to question the ultimate chances of British success. In England the effect was still more powerful. The unfortunate malady of the king rendered the appointment of a regency unavoidable. An Opposition, dangerous before, had thus obtained an accidental accession to their strength. The anti-war-cry was at its height; and if Ministers were obliged to yield to the political pressure at home, the first act of their successors would be to retire from that contest altogether, which they had so often and so emphatically pronounced to be only a hopeless expenditure of blood and treasure. All these considerations, therefore, confirmed Massena's resolution to hold his present position to the last.

If ever a general was prompted by personal considerations to act in opposition to his judgment, that man was Wellington. By following the cautious system which prudence pointed out, he was tolerably certain that success would crown his efforts; and he was equally convinced that in the meanwhile, his motives would be mistaken, and his military reputation traduced. If he could but win another battle—and there was a fair presumption that a trial would prove fortunate—"a victory would have silenced his opponents, both in England and Portugal, and placed him in a situation to dictate the measures of war to the Ministers, instead of having to struggle incessantly against their fears."

Other motives might have formed a sufficient plea to justify the adoption of active operations. Humanity would influence Lord Wellington to risk a battle, were it only to relieve the distresses of the Portuguese, now suffering intensely from the presence of an army, whose rapacity and licentiousness increased with the privations their numbers and their wants produced. Military policy might equally dictate that course. He was aware that Massena's reinforcements must greatly exceed any that he could expect. In Castile a corps had assembled under Count d'Erlon, and Soult and Mortier were in active preparation in Andalusia. A blow might be struck, however, before, by any of these accessions, the strength of Massena should be increased. If it succeeded, the French would merely be driven back upon reinforcements already on the frontier; and the junction of one corps would amply replace the losses of an action. If he advanced, therefore, every step he took removed him farther from supplies attainable only from the ocean—while, with an improvided army, he must cross an exhausted country, from which all that rapine

and ingenuity could glean, had been already gathered with an unpitying hand.

These were to be the fruits of victory—but what would have been the consequences of defeat? Probably the loss of the Lines—and, in that event, the loss of Lisbon, followed by a hurried embarkation, and an abandonment of the Peninsula. The British divisions once withdrawn, could Portugal, when left to her own resources, maintain the contest for a month?

Under these convictions Lord Wellington addressed to Lord Liverpool the following statement of his views:

"The question whether I should attack the enemy in the position which he now occupies, has been well considered by me. I have a superior army, I think, by 10,000 men, or one sixth, including the Spaniards; and, notwithstanding some defects in its composition, I think I should succeed. But the loss must necessarily be very great in killed and wounded; and the necessity which would exist of exposing the troops to the weather for some days and nights would throw a great proportion of this convalescent army into the hospital.

"If this be true, our business is not to fight the French army, which we certainly cannot beat out of the Peninsula, but to give occupation to as large a portion of it as we can manage, and to leave the war in Spain to the guerillas. As long as the French do not interfere with our supplies, or the resources of the Portuguese Government, or any point of our security, I think it very immaterial whether they are in Spain or Portugal. Indeed, adverting to the greater difficulties they have in subsisting in the latter country, and in keeping up their communications, I believe it is more advantageous that they should be where they are. Their numbers are certainly diminishing daily, while they do us no mischief; on the contrary, we are nearer to our resources than ever we were, and they leave the whole of the north of Spain open to the operations of the guerillas."

For some weeks the armies of Wellington and Massena continued quietly in each other's presence. Both generals anxiously looked forward to a battle; it was an event which both desired; but, as the positions of both were strong, the assailant must fight at disadvantage, and neither seemed inclined to throw a chance away.

The arrival at Lisbon of reinforcements, which contrary winds had long detained, induced Massena to believe that his opponent would now venture to attack. Rio Mayor, as the most vulnerable point, was the quarter from which danger might

be expected ; and, to satisfy himself that the allied divisions were not collecting at Alcoentre, the Duke of Abrantes made a reconnaissance on January 19th. With his characteristic intrepidity, Junot galloped into the place before the allied pickets had cleared the street ; and a German hussar, who was retiring, turned and wounded him dangerously with a carbine ball, the bullet lodging between the nose and cheekbone, and disabling the French marshal for the remainder of the campaign.

On February 2nd, General Foy reached Massena's head-quarters, after a perilous and harassing journey, during which he had been incessantly exposed to the attacks of the Partidas. On one occasion he lost his despatches, and half the escort ; and in a night march across the mountains three hundred of the detachment which accompanied him perished from cold and fatigue. His opportune arrival relieved Massena's uncertainty, and put him in full possession of the views and objects of the Emperor. Napoleon's commands were peremptory. The position then occupied by the French armies in Portugal must be maintained—Abrantes besieged—and while the ninth corps was added to the grand army, Massena was apprised that orders had been already despatched to Soult to move through the Alentejo, and assist in a series of concerted operations. It was further intimated that, should circumstances render it necessary, Andalusia would be abandoned, to enable the army of Portugal to hold their ground on the southern banks of the Tagus, and finally effect the great object of the Emperor, by driving Lord Wellington to his ships.

Repeated orders to the above effect had been transmitted from Napoleon to the Duke of Dalmatia, but the despatches had been intercepted by the guerillas, and it was therefore late in December before Soult was acquainted with the wishes of the Emperor. The marshal lost no time in carrying them into effect ; and having drafted four thousand infantry from the first corps, he marched with the cavalry of Latour Maubourg to Seville. To secure that city in his absence, he entrusted the command to General Daricau, and entrenched it on the side of Niebla ; and having posted Godinot at Cordova, Digeon at Ecija, and Remond at Gibraleon, Soult immediately put his *corps d'armée* in motion. His force amounted to twenty thousand men, of whom four thousand were cavalry, with fifty pieces of field artillery, a siege and pontoon train, and an enormous number of country carts, for the transport of ammunition and

stores. Victor, in the meantime, was entrusted with the blockade of Cadiz and the protection of the French lines.

On the 26th, Soult proceeded to invest Badajoz. Mendizabal was already in the fortress; and with a strong position under the walls, and ten thousand men exclusive of the garrison, with common discretion he might have been considered in perfect security. He was protected by three fortresses; while the Guadiana and the Gevora covering his front, his right rested on Fort St. Christoval; Elvas was in the rear of his centre, Campo Mayor behind his left; and Lord Wellington, in an able and lucid memorandum, had amply detailed the means by which he could, and with perfect safety to himself, prevent the French marshal from investing Badajoz at all.

"Badajoz is situated on the left bank of the Guadiana; which river is from three to five hundred yards broad, and washes one-fourth of the *enceinte*, rendering it nearly inattackable. The defences along the river are confined to a simple and badly flanked rampart, with an exposed *revêtement*, but on the other sides consists of eight spacious and well-built regular fronts, having a good counter-scarp, covered way, and glacis, but the ravelins incomplete. The scarp of the bastions exceeds thirty feet in height, and that of the curtains varies from twenty-three to twenty-six feet. In advance of these fronts are two detached works: one called the Bardaleras, at two hundred yards' distance, is a crown-work; its escarps are low, its ditches narrow, and its rear badly closed: the other, called the Picurina, is a strong redoubt, four hundred yards in advance of the town. On the north-east of the town, at the angle formed by the junction of the river Rivillas with the Guadiana, rises a hill, to the height of more than one hundred feet, the summit of which is crowned by an old castle; and its walls, naked, weak, and but partially flanked, here form part of the enceinte of the place.

"Immediately opposite to the castle, on the other bank of the Guadiana, at the distance of five hundred yards, are situated the heights of Christoval, rising to nearly the elevation of the castle; and as the terreplein, or interior space of the castle, is an inclined plane towards the Guadiana, every part of it is seen from the Christoval heights. To prevent a besieger readily availing himself of this advantage, in any attack of the town, a fort has been constructed on them: its figure is nearly that of a square of three hundred feet; the scarp, which is well built of stone, is twenty feet in height, and mostly well covered by a revêted counter-scarp.

"The communication between the town and Fort Christoval is very open to interruption; being either by a bridge, six hundred yards in length, subject to be enfiladed, or by boats for which there is no security."

It was strange with what indifference the population in the south of Spain had witnessed the progress of the war; and their unaccountable apathy formed a striking contrast to the fierce and active opposition offered to the invading armies in every province besides, and, probably, it confirmed Soult in the hazardous experiment of withdrawing half the force from the blockade of Cadiz to carry on his operations in Estremadura. It was not to be expected that a force numerically superior to that which held them in duresse, would continue long inactive; and Victor, with an investing line of twenty-five miles in length, and hardly twenty thousand men to hold it, distributed his reduced force with excellent judgment, and made every preparation to repel the attempts, which, in Soult's absence, would probably be made by the Anglo-Spanish army, to force his position and raise the siege of Cadiz.

The allied troops who formed the garrison of the city were commanded by their respective officers; the British by Lieutenant-General Graham, the Spaniards by Don Manuel de Lapena. When a plan of operations was finally arranged, the English general waived his right to command, and consented to act under the orders of a man, who, subsequently, proved himself totally unworthy of the honour which a brave and able officer had thus conceded.

A gale of wind prevented the allies from landing at Tarifa, and drove them to Algesiras, where they disembarked. Lapena here assumed the command, and commenced a long and most fatiguing march, with a force, of all arms, amounting to 14,000 men, of whom about 4,200 were British troops. After moving at first towards Medina Sidonia, and thus imposing on his army a wearying and unnecessary detour, he changed his line of march; and at noon of the 5th, reached the Cerro de Puerco, a low undulating ridge, better known in Peninsular history as the Heights of Barrosa.

The position on which the allies rested is a rising ground which overlooks a rough and heathy plain, and stands about four miles south from the debouchement of the river Santi Petri. It is bounded on the right by the forest of Chiclana, on the left by the Atlantic, and on the centre by a thick wood, beyond which is the Torre de Bermeja.

On reaching Barrosa, Lapena found that Zayas had been attacked by Victor ; and though he still held the bridge he had thrown over the Santi Petri, his communications with the Isla de Leon were seriously endangered. The Spanish general, in consequence, pushed forward his vanguard, under Lardizable,—and, after a sharp affair, the latter effected a junction with Zayas ; and thus the whole of the allied force was safely posted on the left flank of Victor's lines.

But Lapena could not estimate his advantage. His sole anxiety appeared to turn upon holding his communication safe with Cadiz ; and while his rear, entirely separated from the centre, was still straggling over the country and contrary to the expressed wishes of Graham, who implored him to hold Barrosa, declining his advice, he ordered the British to march through the pine wood on Bermeja. Graham, supposing that Anglona's division and the cavalry would continue to occupy the hill, leaving the flank companies of the 9th and 82nd to protect his baggage, obeyed the order, and commenced his march. But the astonishment of the English general was unbounded, when, on entering the wood, he saw Lapena moving his entire corps from the heights of Barrosa, with the exception of three or four battalions and as many pieces of artillery.

"Unfortunately, the English general was not the only person who had observed that Barrosa was abandoned. Victor, concealed in the forest of Chiclana, anxiously watched the movements of the allies. He saw the fatal error committed by the Spanish leader—and instantly made dispositions to profit from the ignorance and obstinacy of his antagonist."

Keeping three grenadier battalions in reserve, Victor sent orders to Latour Maubourg's cavalry to move rapidly on Vejer, while with the whole of his disposable force he rushed forward to seize the height which his opponent had so unwisely abandoned. Ruffin commanded the left, Laval the centre, and Villatte the reserve. Pivoting upon the latter, Laval's division moved to meet the British— while Ruffin, ascending the reverse of the hill, interposed between the Spaniards and Medina, dispersed the camp-followers in an instant, and captured the guns and baggage.

A crowd of fugitives apprised the English general that the heights were already won—the enemy in his rear—the French cavalry between him and the sea—and Laval's brigade moving in rapid march to fall on his left flank.

"It was indeed a most perilous situation—and in that ex-

tremity, the brave old man to whom the British had been fortunately confided, proved himself worthy of the trust. He saw the ruin of retreat,—safety lay in daring—and though the enemy held the key of the position with fresh troops, Graham boldly determined to attack them with his wearied ones.

"Wheeling right about, with their rear ranks in front, the British regiments issued from the wood, and pressing boldly up the hill, the battle was instantly commenced. Duncan's artillery opened a furious cannonade on the column of Laval; and Colonel Barnard, with the rifles and Portuguese caçadores, extended to the left and began firing. The rest of the British troops formed two masses, without regard to regiments or brigades; one, under General Dilkes, marched direct against Ruffin,—and the other, under Colonel Whately, boldly attacked Laval. On both sides the guns poured a torrent of grape and canister over the field; the infantry kept up a withering fire, and both sides advanced, for both seemed anxious to bring the contest to an issue. Whately, when the lines approached, came forward to the charge, drove the first line upon the second, and routed both with slaughter."

Dilkes's attack upon Ruffin's brigade had been equally bold, and obtained a similar success. Although the French held the crest of the hill, breathless, disorganised, but with a desperate resolution that seemed to hold ordinary disadvantages at defiance Colonel Brown pressed up the ridge. "Half of his detachment went down under the enemy's first fire; yet he maintained the fight, until Dilkes's column, which had crossed a deep hollow, and never stopped even to re-form the regiments, came up, with little order indeed, but in a fierce mood, when the whole ran up towards the summit; there was no slackness on any side, and at the very edge of the ascent, their gallant opponents met them. A dreadful, and for some time a doubtful, fight ensued; but Ruffin and Chaudron Rousseau, commanding the chosen grenadiers, both fell, mortally wounded. The English bore strongly onward; and their incessant slaughtering fire forced the French from the hill, with the loss of three guns and many brave soldiers."

Still the routed brigades, though heavily repulsed, exhibited an undaunted spirit worthy of their former fame, and made a brave but bootless effort to renew the fight, and restore the fortune of the day. Retiring by concentric lines, they attempted to rally at the point where their disordered masses united, and arrest the further advance of the British regiments. The English

artillery, however, rendered every exertion to recover their formation unavailing ; the fire of the guns was rapid, close, and murderous,—the shattered brigades yielded to its violence—and the handful of cavalry charged furiously, and completed the victory.

"Nothing could exceed the dastardly duplicity with which the Spanish general abandoned his gallant ally. Lapena never made a movement towards the succour of the British ; and although the French cavalry scarcely exceeded two hundred men, and the Spanish, under Whittingham, amounted to more than eight, the latter never drew a sabre. Never was there a finer field for cavalry to act on with effect ; Ruffin's left was perfectly open ; and even a demonstration of attack must have turned defeat to ruin. Three troops of German hussars, under Ponsonby, reached the field at the close of the battle, just as the beaten divisions were attempting to unite. They charged through the French squadrons, overthrew them, captured two guns, and sabred many of Ruffin's grenadiers, while endeavouring to regain their ranks."

"To paint the character of Barrosa in a few words, Napier's might well describe it. 'The contemptible feebleness of Lapena furnished a surprising contrast to the heroic vigour of Graham, whose attack was an inspiration rather than a resolution—so wise, so sudden was the decision, so swift, so conclusive was the execution.'"

CHAPTER XII

Such was the contest at Barrosa—the shortest of the Peninsular conflicts, and, with the exception of Albuera, the bloodiest far. The victors and the vanquished suffered heavily ; the French loss, however, being nearly double that sustained by the British. Had Lapena, retaining his infantry, despatched his cavalry and horse artillery to the assistance of his ally, Victor's defeat would have been ruinous ; and consequently, the blockade of Cadiz must have been raised. The Spaniard had no plea to extenuate his treachery. With twelve thousand fresh soldiers what had he to dread ? And yet, after the unequalled gallantry of the brave men he had abandoned secured a glorious triumph, he looked idly on while the wreck of the beaten brigades were hurrying in dreadful disorder from the heights in the direction of Chiclana. That his troops, if properly commanded, would not have been wanting in their duty, may be fairly inferred

from the circumstance of the Walloon Guards and regiment of Ciudad Real, without orders, counter-marching when they heard the firing, and hastening to the scene of action.

It would have been well had the mischievous consequences of this military pilgrimage—for a rambling movement through lagunes and by-roads to surprise an enemy already on his guard, cannot properly be termed by any better name—ended with its own lame and impotent conclusion. The intelligence reached England with ominous rapidity, and it was the signal for a burst of popular indignation. Those who were unfriendly to the maintenance of a contest on the Peninsula, seized this as a favourable opportunity of protesting against its further continuance; and men who, with clearer views, had hitherto supported Ministers, and advocated the sound policy of keeping the battle at a distance, were now seriously alarmed, and began, in Lord Wellington's words, to inquire—"Can such a people be saved? Are they worth saving?"

Such were the feelings entertained too generally in Britain towards the Spaniards; and the events which immediately succeeded the battle of Barrosa were not calculated to effect a favourable change in public sentiment. While the ferment caused by Lapena's misconduct was at its height, intelligence reached England that Badajoz had fallen, and a fortress, as yet unscathed by the enemy, had been lost through the treachery of its worthless governor!

After the destruction of Mendizabal's army, the French had pressed the siege with vigour, completed their second parallel, and carrying the sap to the covered way, their miners made preparations to blow down the counter-scarp. Rafael Menacho, however, retrenched the streets; and as the fire of the place was superior to that of the French batteries, and the besiegers were annoyed by constant sallies of the garrison, Mortier was under serious apprehensions that his efforts to reduce the fortress would prove fruitless. Unfortunately, while personally directing a sortie to prevent the covered way from being crowned, the brave old governor was killed by a cannon shot, and the command devolved upon a man, on whom it afterwards conferred an infamous celebrity.

Jose de Imaz had served under Romana in the north of Europe, and had been subsequently employed with the Spanish armies; and he now assumed the command of Badajoz under every encouragement. Of provisions and ammunition he had an ample supply, and his garrison comprised 8,500 effective

men. The besiegers were sadly reduced by sickness and fatigue —the breach was impracticable—and the telegraph at Elvas informed him that Massena was in full retreat, and Wellington advancing to raise the siege,—an assurance confirmed by a private letter, which a confidential messenger succeeded in delivering. "Imaz read the letter, and instantly surrendered, handing over, at the same moment, the intelligence thus obtained to the enemy"

But national pride required that some honourable token of respect should be offered by the enemy, as an attestation of his bravery ; and Imaz demanded and obtained permission, that his grenadiers should defile through the breach. Alas ! that feat was more difficult than he had imagined ; the fracture in the escarp was found too small, and Imaz was obliged to enlarge the opening himself. Not a French soldier would assist ; they all stood looking on in silent contempt, while with Spanish stateliness, and in all the pomp of full-blown ignominy, the Governor of Badajoz marched out eight thousand men, in the presence of a besieging force which did not much exceed the number of his own garrison !

Was this base traitor shot or hanged ? He was not. To the indignant remonstrances of Lord Wellington the Spanish Government tardily responded, and proceedings were instituted to bring Imaz to justice ; but in tedious formalities they surpassed even those of an English court of equity, and they consequently outlived the war ! In the meantime the worthy Governor of Badajoz enjoyed the dignified ease which the purchase-money of his treason had secured.

With the fall of Badajoz, Soult's expedition terminated. The reverses experienced in Andalusia demanded his immediate presence ; and leaving Mortier to reduce Campo Mayor, after an unexampled success with means so comparatively small the French marshal returned to resume the siege of Cadiz.

While these events were progressing in Andalusia and Estremadura, Massena commenced a retreat, as admirable, in a military point of view, as it was execrable in a moral one. In his present position, the French marshal had no longer the means of remaining. "Sickness wasted the army, food became daily scarcer, the organisation of the troops was seriously lessened, the leading generals were at variance, and the conspiracy to put St. Cyr at the head of the army in Spain, was by no means relinquished." Aware that large reinforcements

were expected by Lord Wellington, Massena appeared to await their arrival in the Tagus as his signal to retire. The transports, after a six weeks' passage, landed on March 2nd; and the Prince of Essling, having been apprised, by a secret agent of the circumstance, broke up from Santarem on the morning of the 6th.

The French marshal had four lines open by which he might retreat; but that through the valley of the Mondego was the one which he determined to adopt; and in selecting it, he secured a double route. By crossing the Mondego he might march upon Oporto through a country as yet unexhausted, and therefore capable of affording supplies for his army while engaged in the operation; or by moving up by the left bank of the river, he had Guarda and Almeida in his rear. One objection existed to the adoption of a route by the Mondego. From the present position his corps occupied, he must execute a flank movement to his right to gain the actual line of his retreat; and burthened with 10,000 sick men, and the whole *matériel* of an army, this was a serious difficulty indeed.

With admirable skill, while removing his hospitals and baggage to the rear in the direction of Thomar, he still maintained a bold front, and seemed as if his intention was not to retire, but actually to cross the Zezere; while an able disposition of Ney's corps, which concentrated near Leyria, indicated that a movement on Torres Vedras was contemplated, and, of course, added to the uncertainty of Lord Wellington.

The difficulty of obtaining means of transport for his sick men obliged Massena to destroy such stores as might be dispensed with, and the guns he could not horse efficiently. Every encumbrance had been removed four marches in his rear, and thus a great object was achieved before his retreat virtually commenced. To his reserve cavalry the protection of the sick and wounded was entrusted. They led the march, followed by the 8th corps; and the 6th, the light cavalry, and the best of his artillery formed an imposing rear-guard.

Lord Wellington had penetrated his opponent's design, and detached Picton's division to cross the Sierra de Ancèao by a mountain road, and turn the left of the enemy. Believing that their position was perfectly secure, the astonishment of the French army was unbounded, when the red columns

of the English were seen far in the rear of their left, winding round the base of a mountain ridge which had previously concealed their march. Ney's camp was instantly broken up; while covered by the smoke of Condeixa, which he fired to conceal his movements, and favoured by the obstacles which abatis and stockades presented to the advance of the pursuers, the marshal reached Cazal Nova, closely followed by the British skirmishers. Massena, who was at Fonte Coberta, had nearly been made a prisoner; and it was reported that he escaped capture "by taking the feathers out of his hat, and riding through some of the light troops."

Next morning, at dawn of day, the light division moved forward; and owing to a culpable want of discretion in its commanding officer, who, from the dense fog which obscured every object at the distance of a few paces, should have cautiously felt his way as he advanced, the 52nd Regiment found itself, on a sudden clearance of the weather, completely within the French outposts, and engaged, alone and unsupported, with the whole of Ney's corps. The British light troops were instantly pushed into action to relieve a regiment so seriously endangered, and a fierce combat ensued. Gradually Picton and Cole got upon the left flank of the enemy; the other divisions, with the heavy cavalry and batteries, advanced against the centre, and Ney was driven from his ground; but with consummate skill he executed an orderly retreat, maintaining ridge after ridge, until he fell back on the main body of the French army, who occupied the strong position of Miranda de Corvo.

With a very small force, Ney secured a safe passage for his artillery and stores; and then, having blown up the greater portion of the bridge, he held the right bank of the river, until Massena had crossed the Alva.

Circumstances favoured the French retreat. Rain fell in torrents—the rivers rose with the rapidity so common in a hilly country; and the villainous misconduct of the Portuguese Government, at this trying moment, was painfully displayed. Massena's retreating army was amply provisioned; and the advancing columns of the allies were actually threatened with starvation. For the Portuguese troops no means of subsistence had been provided by their own executive,—from actual inanition they were unable to get on,—and but for the assistance rendered by the British commissariat, they must have actually

perished from mere hunger. No language can describe the shameful misconduct of the regency. The most flimsy pretexts were made apologies for the most iniquitous neglect. To the wants of their own soldiers, as well as to those of their allies, they were equally indifferent,—a scarcity of fuel in a country abounding in wood was a plea for the starvation of the one,—and when reinforcements landed in the Tagus, they were left in the streets of Lisbon without a meal or even a bed to rest upon.

The following letter to Mr. Stuart describes the wretched state of the Portuguese army, and that, too, at the commencement of a campaign, when so much depended on their efficiency.

. . . . .

"It is useless to propose any arrangement for this or any other purpose, if the Portuguese Government will execute nothing.

"I repeat, that matters cannot go on as they are ; there must be a radical change in the whole of the system of the government in respect to the resources for carrying on the war, or I shall recommend to his majesty's Government to withdraw his army.

"It is a favourite notion with some members of the Government, that the Portuguese troops can do with very little or no food. Among other good qualities, they possess that of being patient under privations in an extraordinary degree. But men cannot perform the labour of soldiers without food. Three of General Pack's brigade died of famine yesterday on their march, and above one hundred and fifty have fallen out from weakness, many of whom must have died from the same cause.

"The Government neglected both establishments and troops when they were on the Rio Mayor river, and neither are in the state in which they ought to be at the commencement of a campaign. The mules of the artillery are unable to draw the guns for want of food, for any length of time ; the baggage mules of the army are nearly all dead of famine ; and the drivers have neither been paid nor fed.

"This is the state of the army at the commencement of the campaign : and I see clearly that, unless the Government should change their system, no remedy will be applied, and the whole burden of defending this country will fall upon Great Britain."

. . . . .

"I have had the honour of receiving your letter of the 9th

instant, containing a complaint of the Conde de Castello Melhor that olive trees are cut on his estate near Bucellas, for the purpose of making abatis.

"I beg that the Government will be pleased to determine :

"First, whether the works which have once saved Lisbon shall be rendered as complete as they can be made before the enemy may approach them again, or whether we are to wait till the last moment to complete what may be done beforehand.

"Secondly, that they will determine whether any, and what, sums of money shall be paid to individuals for the damage done to their property by these works ; and

"Thirdly, that they will order payment to be made to all the individuals in this situation, as well as to the Conde de Castello Melhor.

"Considering that this gentleman is a man of high family, who, it is supposed, will save his property from robbery and confiscation, and his person from slavery, and his family from violation and outrage, by the measures adopted for the salvation of the country, it might have been expected that he would not have been the first to demand from the Government payment for the damage which those measures do to him."

That a demand of this description should create disgust in the mind of the British general may be readily believed. A claim, seeking remuneration for a paltry loss, might be extenuated by a plea of indigence ; but in a noble of the land—a personage of large estate, in the application there was the most contemptible meanness. The time, also, when the claim was preferred, was unfortunate ; at that period, on account of the expense incurred by its maintenance on the Peninsula, the recall of the British army was seriously contemplated by the Ministry ; and while England, during the past year, had expended nine millions in supporting the cause of Spain and Portugal, the Regent grudged fire-wood for the bivouacs of his allies ; and the Conde de Castello Melhor was asking a pecuniary consideration, for the very means employed to preserve his estates from spoliation.

Whatever intentions the British Government might have previously entertained of removing their army from the Peninsula, they appear to have been abandoned after the following letter was received at home. As a document, the information it contains renders it exceedingly valuable ; and the sound reasoning with which it concludes, must have gone far in confirming

such of the British Cabinet as might have been hitherto in doubt respecting the policy of keeping the battle at a distance.

"I have received your letter of February 20th, to which I should not have troubled you with a reply, if I did not conceive that Government have taken an erroneous view of their expenditure and their situation in this country.

"In my opinion, Government are not aware, and have it not in their power at present to form an opinion, of the exact expense of the war in the Peninsula. The first step to ascertain it would be to analyse the charge, and then to see what the same army would cost them elsewhere, at home, for instance; for I suppose that if the army should be withdrawn from the Peninsula, it would not be disbanded.

"My opinion has invariably been, that it was the interest of Great Britain to employ in Portugal the largest army that could be spared from other services; and that no more than 2,000 or 2,500 men ought to have been stationed at Cadiz, which would not have cost a shilling more than their pay. The expense at Cadiz, which I imagine will amount to no trifle, out of the six or nine millions, has been, in my opinion, entirely thrown away, equally with the services of the troops, which would have made a great difference here early in the last summer.

"In respect to offensive or defensive operations here, if they are left to me, I shall carry on either the one or the other, according to the means in my power, compared at the time with those of the enemy, and bearing in mind always your lordship's instructions of February 27th, 1810, marked A.

"I would recommend to Government to increase the force here as much as possible, putting down the establishments elsewhere, and of course decreasing the expense in those parts of the empire from which they draw the troops. By this measure they will put it in the power of the officer here to avail himself of every opportunity, they will be sure of holding this country as long as they please, and they will save the whole expense of transports.

"I shall be sorry if Government should think themselves under the necessity of withdrawing from this country on account of the expense of the contest. From what I have seen of the objects of the French Government, and the sacrifices they make to accomplish them, I have no doubt that if the British army were for any reason to withdraw from the Peninsula, and the French Government were relieved from the pressure of military

operations on the Continent, *they would incur all risks to land an army in his majesty's dominions. Then indeed would commence an expensive contest; then would his majesty's subjects discover what are the miseries of war, of which, by the blessing of God, they have hitherto had no knowledge; and the cultivation, the beauty, and prosperity of the country, and the virtue and happiness of its inhabitants would be destroyed, whatever might be the result of the military operations.* God forbid that I should be a witness, much less an actor in the scene; and I only hope that the King's Government will consider well what I have above stated to your lordship; will ascertain, as nearly as is in their power, the actual expense of employing a certain number of men in this country beyond that of employing them at home or elsewhere; and will keep up their force here on such a footing as will at all events secure their possession without keeping the transports, if it does not enable their commander to take advantage of events, and assume the offensive."

The military skill displayed by the allied general during his advance in pursuit of Massena, proved him to be a master of the art of war. Never had a retreating army a more favourable country for its operations; and never was any permitted to avail itself so little of these advantages. Although every league he crossed offered to the Prince of Essling some position of matchless strength, it was seldom more than occupied, when some beautiful movement of Lord Wellington turned a flank, and caused its immediate abandonment,—science thus effecting without the expenditure of a cartridge, what, with a less intelligent commander, would have required an enormous sacrifice of life.

While these splendid operations of Lord Wellington established his military superiority over him surnamed by Napoleon "l'enfant gâté de la victoire"—the results of his successes were of paramount value in a moral point of view. Coimbra and the Upper Beira were saved; and a great city and valuable district thus escaped the fearful visitation of a relentless enemy, whose ravages had "sent fear before, and left ruin behind their track."

It is a painful task, even at this distant day, to recall to memory the frightful atrocities which stamped an undying infamy on the retreat of the French army out of Portugal; and the detail of the barbarities they perpetrated would now be considered too horrible for credence, were they not faithfully established by the evidence of those who were actual eye-witnesses. Colonel Napier relates the following revolting story of human suffering:

"This day's march disclosed a horrible calamity. A large house, situated in an obscure part of the mountains, was discovered filled with starving persons. Above thirty women and children had sunk, and, sitting by the bodies, were fifteen or sixteen survivors, of whom one only was a man, but all so enfeebled as to be unable to eat the little food we had to offer them. The youngest had fallen first; all the children were dead; none were emaciated in the bodies, but the muscles of the face were invariably drawn transversely, giving the appearance of laughing, and presenting the most ghastly sight imaginable. The man seemed most eager for life; the women appeared patient and resigned, and, even in this distress, had arranged the bodies of those who first died with decency and care."

Again, he says: "Every horror that could make war hideous attended this dreadful march! Distress, conflagrations, death, in all modes! from wounds, from fatigue, from water, from the flames, from starvation! On every side unlimited violence, unlimited vengeance! I myself saw a peasant hounding on his dog to devour the dead and dying; and the spirit of cruelty once unchained smote even the brute creation. On the 15th the French general, to diminish the encumbrances of his march, ordered a number of beasts of burthen to be destroyed; the inhuman fellow, charged with the execution, hamstringed five hundred asses and left them to starve, and thus they were found by the British army on that day. The mute but deep expression of pain and grief, visible in these poor creatures' looks, wonderfully roused the fury of the soldiers; and so little weight has reason with the multitude, when opposed by a momentary sensation, that no quarter would have been given to any prisoner at that moment."

The towns of Redinha, Condeixa, and Miranda de Corvo, with all the villages in their line of march, were burnt by the French rear-guards. To cover their regressive movements by the smoke of the blazing houses might present a cause, although it could not offer an excuse. But other ravages were apparently committed out of mere wantonness; and, as was the case with respect to Leyria and Alcobaça, the order for their destruction was issued by Massena himself.

"The most venerable structure in Portugal was the convent of Alcobaça. Its foundation was coeval with the monarchy. It had been the burial-place of the kings of Portugal for many generations. The munificence of nobles and princes, the craft

of superstition, and the industry and learning of its members in better times, had contributed to fill this splendid pile with treasures of every kind. Its gorgeous vestments, its vessels of plate and gold, and its almost matchless jewelry, excited the admiration of the vulgar; the devotee and the philosopher were equally astonished at the extraordinary articles in its relic-room; the artist and the antiquary beheld with wonder and delight its exquisite monuments of ancient art; and its archives and library were as important to Portuguese literature as the collections of the Museum or the Bodleian are in our own country. Orders were issued from the French head-quarters to burn this place; that the work of destruction might be complete, it was begun in time, and the mattock and hammer were employed to destroy what the flames would have spared. The tessellated pavement from the entrance to the high altar was broken up with pickaxes, and the ornaments of the pillars destroyed nearly up to the arches."

The beautiful edifice of Batalha, although it had never been completed by its founder, Joam I., was one of the finest specimens of Gothic architecture in Europe. As the resting-place of one of the most glorious of their monarchs, the place was hallowed in the memories of the Portuguese. But its sacredness found no favour in the sight of the Prince of Essling. Its tombs were desecrated; the remains of royalty rudely torn from their grave; and the body of Joam placed through derision "in a pulpit, in the attitude of one preaching."

Meanwhile the French marshal, after destroying the bridges of Muncella and Pombeira, took a position on the Sierra de Moita, and despatched his second corps up the banks of the Alva, while marauding parties were sent out in every direction to obtain supplies. Lord Wellington, however, speedily disturbed his plans, obliging Massena to recall Reynier; and while he concentrated his whole corps on the Sierra, the English general threw a bridge over the Alva, passed the light division between Port Muncella and Pombeira, and occupied Arganil with his right wing. These movements caused immediate alarm, and obliged the Prince of Essling to decamp. Guarda was now his object, and, hurrying to Celerico with rapid strides, he was forced to secure the defiles by lightening his march not only at the expense of a quantity of baggage and ammunition, but by the abandonment of his more distant foragers, of whom fully eight hundred were afterwards taken prisoners.

Wellington had concentrated his divisions at the Sierra de

Moita on the 19th, but he was obliged to halt the columns until his supplies came up from the Mondego ; and, with the exception of the cavalry and light troops continuing the pursuit, the French were undisturbed until they reached Guarda.

It is certain that Massena had determined to hold by Portugal to the last ; and after depositing his hospitals and heavy baggage in Almeida, countermarch by Sabugal to the Elga, and thus place himself in direct communication with Joseph Buonaparte and Soult. How far that plan might have succeeded can be now only a matter of conjecture ; for the insubordination of his generals had arisen to a height that rendered any unity of operation an impossibility. All were at variance with each other ; and all, stranger still, on the worst terms with the Prince of Essling himself. An open rupture occurred at Miranda de Corvo between Ney and Massena ; and at Celerico, the former absolutely refused to obey the orders of his superior, and in place of marching towards Coria, fell back upon Almeida. For this breach of discipline Ney was deprived of his command, and the sixth corps given to Loison, a personal favourite of the commander-in-chief.

Foiled in the design of establishing himself upon the Elga, Massena determined to hold Guarda for a time, a measure which the success of Julian Sanchez, in intercepting the supplies intended for the French garrisons in Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida, rendered particularly desirable. The apparent, rather than the real strength of this city, had once conferred upon it a military reputation—and General Dumouriez had termed it "the key of Portugal." From this fine position, however, Massena was speedily dislodged by one of those masterly combinations, to which Lord Wellington was indebted for much of his success.

On the 28th, the French were driven from Frexadas ; the 3rd Division secured the upper bridges of the Mondego ; while the Portuguese ordenanza, under Trant and Miller, occupied the banks of the Pinhal, and cut off all communication with Almeida. "Early on the 29th, the 3rd, 6th, and light divisions, and two regiments of light cavalry, disposed in five columns of attack on a half-circle round the foot of the Guarda mountain, ascended by as many paths, all leading upon the town of Guarda, and outflanking both the right and left of the enemy ; they were supported on one wing by the militia, on the other by the 5th Division, and in the centre by the 1st and 7th Divisions."

The imposing steadiness which marked the advance of the

allied troops, effected Lord Wellington's object without a contest. Massena hastily retired from his position—and had the British cavalry turned the confusion to advantage, which the beautiful movements of the infantry had created, Reynier must have been destroyed. Slade's pursuit was feeble and inefficient; and the second corps saved itself with a loss of three hundred men.

Massena took a new position on the right bank of the Coa, from which Lord Wellington determined that he should be driven. The operations which resulted were thus detailed in a despatch to Lord Liverpool from Villa Fermosa, and dated April 9th, 1811:

"When I last addressed your lordship the enemy occupied the Upper Coa, having his right at Rovina, and guarding the post of Rapoula de Coa with a detachment at the bridge of Ferrerias, and his left at Sabugal, and the eighth corps was at Alfayates.

"The right of the British army was opposite Sabugal, and the left at the bridge of Ferrerias. The militia, under General Trant and Colonel Wilson, crossed the Coa below Almeida, in order to threaten the communication of that place with Ciudad Rodrigo and the enemy's army.

"The river Coa is difficult of access throughout its course; and the position which the enemy had taken was very strong, and could be approached only by its left. The troops were therefore put in motion on the morning of the 3rd, to turn the enemy's left above Sabugal, and to force the passage of the bridge and town; with the exception of the 6th Division, which remained opposite the sixth corps, which was at Rovina, and one battalion of the 7th Division, which observed the enemy's detachment at the bridge of Ferrerias.

"Colonel Beckwith's brigade of the light division was the first that crossed the Coa, with two squadrons of cavalry upon their right. Four companies of the 95th, and three companies of Colonel Elder's Caçadores drove in the enemy's pickets, and were supported by the 43rd Regiment.

"At this moment a rain-storm came on, which rendered it impossible to see anything; and these troops having pushed on in pursuit of the enemy's pickets, came upon the left of their main body, which it had been intended they should turn. The light troops were driven back upon the 43rd Regiment; and, as soon as the atmosphere became clear, the enemy, having perceived that the body which had advanced were not strong, attacked them in a solid column, supported by cavalry and

artillery. These troops repulsed this attack, and advanced in pursuit upon the enemy's position, where they were attacked by a fresh column on the left, and were charged by the hussars on their right. They retired, and took post behind a wall, from which post they again repulsed the enemy, and advanced a second time in pursuit of them, and took from them a howitzer. They were, however, again attacked by a fresh column, with cavalry, and retired again to their post, where they were joined by the other brigade of the light division, consisting of the two battalions of the 52nd, and the 1st Caçadores. These troops repulsed the enemy; and Colonel Beckwith's brigade and the 1st Battalion of the 52nd again advanced upon them. They were attacked again by a fresh column, supported by cavalry, which charged their right, and they took post in an enclosure upon the top of a height, from whence they could protect the howitzer which the 43rd had taken; and they drove back the enemy.

"The enemy were making arrangements to attack them again in this post, and had moved a column on their left, when the light infantry of Major-General Picton's division, under Lieutenant-Colonel Williams, supported by Major-General the Hon. C. Colville's brigade, opened their fire upon them.

"At the same moment the head of Major-General Dunlop's column crossed the bridge of the Coa, and ascended the heights on the right flank of the enemy, and the cavalry appeared on the high ground in rear of the enemy's left: the enemy then retired across the hills towards Rendo, leaving the howitzer in the possession of those who had so gallantly gained and preserved it, and about two hundred killed on the ground, six officers, and three hundred prisoners in our hands.

"Although the operations of this day were, by unavoidable accidents, not performed in the manner in which I intended they should be, I consider the action that was fought by the light division, by Colonel Beckwith's brigade principally, with the whole of the second corps, to be one of the most glorious that British troops were ever engaged in."

To the gallantry of the troops Lord Wellington bore ample testimony; and not only in his official details, but also in his private correspondence, he alludes with manifest satisfaction to the noble conduct of his light troops.

"We have given,' he says, "the French a handsome dressing, and I think they will not say again that we are not a manœuvring

army. We may not manœuvre so beautifully as they do ; but I do not desire better sport than to meet one of their columns *en masse* with our lines. The poor second corps received a terrible beating from the 43rd and 52nd on the 3rd."

After his defeat, Reynier fell back on Rendo. The French loss was exceedingly heavy—as the minimum has been laid at one thousand, while others raise it one-half more. This trial of strength seemed to have decided Massena upon abandoning Portugal altogether. On the 4th his march was rapidly directed on Ciudad Rodrigo ; and on the 5th, the French rear-guard crossed the frontier, and left the land they had invaded without an enemy !

The discomfiture of the army of Portugal was in every way decisive ; and Massena's campaign conveyed two useful lessons. Regarding the qualities of the British army, the Continental belief was very general, that with much active courage and matchless endurance, they had neither talents for manœuvring, nor, had they possessed them, were their generals sufficient tacticians to turn them to account. This error, by Lord Wellington's recent operations, was removed. When he acted on the defensive, at every place where he awaited an attack, his positions were so ably chosen, that the French were always obliged to fight at disadvantage. When it was his interest to advance, half the objects at which he aimed were effected by previous combinations, and sometimes without losing a man. Another military delusion was exposed by the events of this campaign, namely, the irresistible effect of the French attack *en masse*. A quarter of a century had established this opinion ; and the revolutionary victories acquired by movements in heavy columns, had been confirmed by the overthrow of those European powers with whom Napoleon had been more recently engaged. No wonder, therefore, that against the unpractised soldiery of Britain, they had been employed in the fullest assurance of success. But with English battalions opposed to it, the *colonne serrée* proved unavailing ; and against the steady array of even a two-rank line, these perpendicular attacks of Massena ended invariably in discomfiture.

The head of a column, no matter how steadily it advances, must soon be shattered by the converging fire of the enemy who receives it in line. To be effectively employed, a close column should, wedge-like, drive itself through the obstacles opposed, reserving its fire until it gained the flank or central intersection it was launched against, and when it had consequently sufficient

space to deploy. Anything short of breaking a line, or forcing itself between the intermitted spaces of a formation, must be considered as a failure in the attack. To the fire of an enemy in line, a column cannot presume to reply—a front of thirty muskets will be overwhelmed by the fire of three hundred ; and with every shot radiating from its head to its centre, of necessity the leading files of the column are shot down, and the movement of the mass arrested.

"The natural repugnance of men to trample on their own dead and wounded, the cries and groans of the latter, and the whistling of the cannon-shots as they tear open the ranks, produce the greatest disorder, especially in the centre of attacking columns, which, blinded by smoke, unsteadfast of footing, and bewildered by words of command coming from a multitude of officers crowded together, can neither see what is taking place, nor make any effort to advance or retreat without increasing the confusion : no example of courage can be useful, no moral effect can be produced by the spirit of individuals, except upon the head, which is often firm, and even victorious at the moment when the rear is flying in terror."

Notwithstanding these evident disadvantages, to this their favourite method of attack the French adhered tenaciously to the last moment of the war, although the trial of heavy columns against lines was repeatedly made, and always proved unsuccessful. It is an interesting coincidence that the regiment which, with the others of its division, proved the inefficiency of the *colonne serrée* at Sabugal, by the bloody repulses it inflicted upon Massena's second corps, confirmed it at Waterloo by the annihilation of a division of Napoleon's reserve ; and thus produced, as has been asserted, the crisis of that battle, which immortalised the name of Wellington, and achieved the deliverance of Europe !

CHAPTER XIII

When Massena reached the Agueda, his army did not exceed 35,000 effective men. He invaded Portugal with 65,000—at Santarem, Count d'Erlon joined him with 10,000 more ; and 9,000 reinforced him during his retreat ; consequently, the losses sustained during the campaign amounted in round numbers to 40,000 men, of whom at least two-thirds were veteran soldiers.

Although the junction of convalescents and detachments in a few days increased the strength of his *corps d'armée* to 40,000 troops of all arms, Massena did not consider himself in a state that warranted him in recommencing active operations. His troops required a season for repose,—they had been not only numerically, but physically reduced,—their energies exhausted by fatigue, and their spirit broken by a constant succession of defeats. These considerations determined the Prince of Essling to avoid hostilities for the present, and accordingly, he retired to Salamanca. In consequence of this movement of the French marshal, Lord Wellington, cantoning his army between the Coa and Agueda, invested Almeida—while Beresford, with a corps increased by the 4th Division and a brigade of heavy cavalry to 22,000 men, was detached to relieve Campo Mayor, and commence the siege of Badajoz.

The former place surrendered on the 21st, when Beresford had reached Chamusca, and his advanced guards were only two marches distant from the fortress. The very gallant defence made by a Portuguese officer, named Tallia, who with a garrison of not two hundred men, five guns mounted on his works, and the sap pushed forward to the crest of the glacis, resisted with an open breach, and repulsing one assault, surrendered on most honourable terms, and that only when the enemy were forming their storming parties for a second effort, formed a noble contrast to the base treachery of the worthless Governor of Badajoz; and it was a subject of regret to all, that one who defended a weak fortress so bravely, could not have held out a little longer, and received the succour he so well deserved.

Although apprised of the fall of Campo Mayor, Marshal Beresford thought that he might surprise the besiegers; and with this intention he marched rapidly towards the place; and on the morning of the 25th the British advanced guard found itself in presence of the enemy. The French, commanded by Latour Maubourg, were filing out of Campo Mayor in some confusion, their force comprising three battalions of infantry, twelve hundred cavalry, a troop of horse artillery, and the siege train of thirteen heavy guns. Instant orders were issued for an attack. "Colborne marched with the infantry on the right—Head, with the 13th Light Dragoons and two squadrons of Portuguese on the left—and the heavy cavalry formed a reserve. Perceiving that their battering train was endangered, the French cavalry, as the ground over which they were retiring was favourable for the movement, charged the 13th. But they were

vigorously repulsed ; and, failing in breaking the British, the whole, consisting of four regiments, drew up in front, forming an imposing line. The 13th instantly formed and galloped forward—and nothing could have been more splendid than their charge. They rode fairly through the French, overtook and cut down many of the gunners, and at last entirely headed the line of march, keeping up a fierce and straggling encounter with the broken horsemen of the enemy, until some of the English dragoons actually reached the gates of Badajoz, where many of them were captured."

But from the disorderly manner with which the pursuit was carried on, the more solid advantages were lost, which a steadier and more systematic attack might have probably secured. A considerable loss was also a consequence of this rash and ill-directed gallantry ; for, besides seventy prisoners, the allies had one hundred men killed or wounded ; the French losing thrice that number, and a howitzer. The affair of Campo Mayor gave serious displeasure to Lord Wellington ; and the light cavalry were in consequence reprimanded : but all bore testimony to their valour, "and the unsparing admiration of the whole army consoled them."

"In this affair, there were many opportunities for the display of individual courage and dexterity. Colonel Chamorin, of the 26th French dragoons, was encountered by a corporal of the 13th, whose comrade he had just before shot through the head : each was a master of his horse and weapon ; but at length the corporal, striking off the helmet of his enemy with one blow, cleft his head down to the ears with another."

Having obtained possession of Campo Mayor, Marshal Beresford cantoned his troops in Elvas and the villages in its vicinity. The army required rest,—their recent duties had been severe,—and the 4th Division, in particular, had suffered much from fatigue, a scarcity of shoes having obliged them to march barefooted. At Elvas the marshal had been assured by the Portuguese authorities that he should find the necessary *matériel* for throwing a bridge across the Guadiana—a preliminary step towards the investment of Badajoz. But the amount of the means for effecting this work was found to be miserably insufficient. Instead of twenty large boats, which it was alleged had been brought from Badajoz before the siege, but five were found ; and the pontoons sent up from Lisbon were so small, that they neither were calculated to withstand the rapidity of the current, nor bear the weight of artillery. By this delay, General

Philippon, the Governor of Badajoz, was enabled to restore the defences and fill in the trenches ; while Latour Maubourg, who had succeeded Mortier in the command, with his accustomed activity spread his foragers over the country in all directions, and thus obtained a sufficiency of provisions to enable the fortress to withstand a siege.

"Captain Squires, of the Engineers, however, undertook to bridge the Guadiana under Jerumenha, by fixing trestle-piers on each side in the shallows, and connecting them with the five Spanish boats ; wherefore, a squadron of cavalry was secretly passed over by a ford, to protect the workmen from surprise. On April 3rd, the bridge being finished, the troops assembled during the night in the woods near Jerumenha, ready to cross at daylight ; but the river suddenly swelling, swept away the trestles, rendered the ford impassable, and stopped the operations. No more materials could be immediately procured, and the Spanish boats were converted into flying bridges for the cavalry and artillery, while Squires constructed a slight narrow bridge for infantry with the pontoons and with casks taken from the neighbouring villages. To cover this operation a battalion was added to the squadron already on the left bank, and the army commenced passing April 5th ; but it was late in the night of the 6th ere the whole had crossed and taken up their position, which was on a strong range of hills, covered by a swampy rivulet."

Marshal Beresford, leaving the 4th Division to reduce Olivenca, which surrendered on the 15th, advanced to Zafra with the remainder of his army. His object was to oblige Latour Maubourg to retire from Estremadura, and thus secure his operations against Badajoz from the interruption, which the vicinity of a French corps might be expected to occasion. During this movement, a cavalry affair highly creditable to the English dragoons, occurred. Two French regiments—the 2nd and 10th Hussars, advancing on a marauding expedition towards Llerena, had reached Usagre, where they were encountered by the British cavalry. The 13th Light Dragoons charged them most gallantly, broke and pursued them for six miles, and killed, wounded, or made prisoners fully three hundred men. The affair was very brilliant ; and it was, in a military point of view, most valuable, for on the British side not a man was lost.

On the 16th, Marshal Beresford was rejoined by the 4th Division from Olivenca ; and the concentration of the allied army at Zafra was followed by the retreat of Latour Maubourg, who

retired to Guadalcanal on the 18th, leaving Estremadura and its resources at the disposal of his opponent. At this time a brigade of German light infantry reached Olivenca from Lisbon —and on the 21st, Lord Wellington himself arrived at Elvas from the north, and there Marshal Beresford joined him.

On the following day, a formal reconnaissance was made on Badajoz. With the Germans and cavalry division of Madden Lord Wellington forded the Guadiana, and approached close to the fortress. The accidental arrival of a convoy, under protection of infantry and cavalry, induced the escort of Lord Wellington to attempt to cut it off, and obliged Philippon to make a sortie to protect its entrance. A smart affair ensued that caused the allies the loss of a hundred men, and enabled the convoy to reach its destination.

Everything led Lord Wellington to conclude that Soult would not permit Badajoz to fall without making a vigorous effort to save it. Hence, before the place was invested, it was indispensable to secure the co-operation of the Spanish armies, and combine their operations with those of Beresford. In consequence, the allied general proposed that Blake should move from Ayamonte, and take post at Xeres de los Cavalleros ; Ballasteros occupy Barquillo on his left ; while the cavalry of the fifth army stationed at Llerena, should observe the road of Guadalcanal, and communicate through Zafra, by the right, with Ballasteros, and thus watch the passes of the Morena. Castaños was required to furnish three battalions for the siege, keeping the rest of the corps at Merida, to support the Spanish cavalry. It was further stipulated that, in the event of a battle, Albuera, centrically situated with respect to the roads leading from Andalusia to Badajoz, should be the point of concentration for all the allied forces.

It was a subject of general surprise how quickly the French army restored its organisation during its brief rest at Salamanca ; and nothing could have proved more forcibly what immense advantages in warfare are derived from military experience. As the orders of the Emperor were so peremptory, every facility had certainly been given to his lieutenant that could enable him to carry them into effect.

Bessières reinforced the Prince of Essling with a thousand cavalry and a battery of guns from the Imperial Guard— troops were drafted for a similar purpose from Leon and Castile ; while Joseph Buonaparte's visit to Paris rendered disposable a large proportion of the corps hitherto retained

at Madrid for the personal protection of the king, and these, also, were promptly moved forward to the Agueda. Massena's *corps d'armée* was thus increased to forty-six thousand effective men, of whom five thousand were cavalry—and with this imposing force he immediately broke up from the Tormes, announcing, in a general order to "the army of Portugal," that the relief of Almeida was the first object to be achieved.

It was a manifesto, however, far better calculated to bring to memory their late disasters, than give any reasonable assurance of an approaching victory. To describe a country from which they had been so recently and ingloriously expelled, as "a scene of triumphs," and even to name "the Lines of Lisbon," was to recall a period of want and misery, sickness and privations, all sustained without a single advantage, and terminated by a ruinous retreat.

When Lord Wellington arrived at Villa Fermosa on April 28th, he found that the French army were concentrating fast at Ciudad Rodrigo, where Massena had been stationary since the 25th. The object of the marshal was no secret; and his superiority in point of strength had been clearly ascertained. For Lord Wellington there was no alternative—and he must either permit Almeida to be relieved, or risk a battle. Upon the latter he decided; and with 32,000 infantry, 1,500 cavalry, and 42 guns, he united his detached corps, and took a position that covered the blockaded fortress.

The allied battle position was on a tableland—the centre in front of Alameda, the left flank resting on Fort Conception; and the right in the village of Fuentes d'Oñoro,—and it had this advantage, that "the French general could not, with any prudence, venture to march, by his own right, against Almeida, lest the allies, crossing the ravine at the villages of Alameda and Fuentes d'Oñoro, should fall on his flank, and drive him into the Agueda. Hence, to cover the blockade, which was maintained by Pack's brigade and an English regiment, it was sufficient to leave the 5th division near Fort Conception, and the 6th Division opposite Alameda. The 1st and 3rd were then concentrated on a gentle rise, about a cannon-shot behind Fuentes d'Oñoro, where the steppe of land which the army occupied turned back, and ended on the Turon, becoming rocky and difficult as it approached that river."

The height of the Azava had made it a hazardous operation to cross the fords; and Massena, pushing his pickets up to the line from Espeja to Marialva, which was held by the light

division, waited until the waters should subside and permit an easier passage. On May 2nd the river had fallen considerably ; and early on that day, the whole of the enemy's *corps d'armée* were discovered moving from Ciudad Rodrigo. Their passage over the Azava was undisputed—for, after a slight cavalry affair at Galegos, Craufurd leisurely retired, and crossing the Dos Casas, occupied the hamlet of Fuentes d'Oñoro.

This lovely village had been alternately possessed by the allies and the enemy ; and, by a very singular good fortune, it had been hitherto respected by both. It stands in a valley on the left bank of the Dos Casas, with rising grounds on either side. The road to Ciudad Rodrigo passes through the hamlet, and a morass extends on that side, until it is bounded by a thick wood ; while, on the other, the ground undulates considerably, and the surface is rocky and uneven. There were many stone enclosures in Fuentes, which would yield good protection to the infantry that might be engaged in its defence ; and the heights behind afforded a rallying-point for troops if forced from the lower village, and also a means of feeding them with reinforcements from the divisions posted in their rear. The upper part of the village stands upon the edge of a ravine which rises boldly from the channel of the Dos Casas ; and the old chapel and a few houses which crowned the height, were, from a situation of difficult approach, particularly defensible.

Upon this sweet village, the first and final efforts of the enemy were made. Moving towards the river the second and eighth corps, in two columns, approached Alameda and Fort Conception ; while a third, comprising the whole cavalry, the sixth, and part of the ninth corps, advanced against Fuentes d'Oñoro.

Wellington never fought under more serious disadvantages. In every arm of war he was weaker than his antagonist,—in cavalry immeasurably inferior,—and Massena's cuirassiers alone should have ensured a victory. Notwithstanding that its grand outline presented a fine battle-ground, the allied position was particularly dangerous. With the Coa in his rear, Wellington had but one point by which artillery could pass the river ; and the narrow bridge at Castello Bom was ill suited for a rapid retreat, had any disaster obliged him to withdraw a beaten army. To turn his opponent's right,—seize his only communication with the left bank of the river,—and, once lodged upon the table-

land, overwhelm the allies with heavy masses, supported by the charges of a splendid cavalry, was evidently Massena's design,—and Loison, consequently, not waiting for his arrival, endeavoured to assist the Prince of Essling's intended operation, by seizing the strong village on which the left of the allies were appuied.

The assault on Fuentes d'Oñoro was furiously made—and it was as fiercely repelled. Oppressed by a heavy cannonade, the lower village was gradually abandoned to the enemy, but the chapel and craggy eminence were desperately maintained. Loison redoubled his efforts ; Wellington reinforced his hard-pressed battalions ; and when night fell, the lower houses of Fuentes remained in possession of the French, and the upper village was occupied by British regiments.

The reconnaissance of the next day confirmed Massena in his first intention of storming the opposite flank of the position, and gaining the plateau, which stretched away from the rugged banks of the Dos Casas. Julian Sanchez, after a short contest, was driven across the Turon, the village of Poco Velho was carried, and Montbrun poured his heavy squadrons over the level summit of the height. After a noble, but unavailing resistance, the allied cavalry were forced to retire, and seek protection from the infantry. The French horsemen instantly galloped forward. They found the light infantry in squares, and unassailable ; but as the 7th Division had not effected that formation, many were cut down in line, and a troop of horse artillery completely surrounded. With other troops a certain defeat must have ensued ; but at this fearful moment their own gallantry and discipline saved the British soldiers. Although surprised by the sudden rush of the cuirassiers, the chasseurs Britanniques threw themselves behind a broken fence, and maintaining a rolling fire that fell upon the assailants with murderous effect, they checked the onward career of the enemy At one place, however, the fury of the fight seemed for a time to centre. "A great commotion was observed amongst the French squadrons ; men and officers closed in confusion towards one point where a thick dust was rising, and where loud cries and the sparkling of blades and flashing of pistols indicated some extraordinary occurrence. Suddenly the multitude was violently agitated, an English shout arose, the mass was rent asunder, and Norman Ramsay burst forth at the head of his battery, his horses breathing fire, and stretching like greyhounds along the plain, his guns bounding like things of no weight, and the mounted gunners in close and compact order protecting the rear."

At this period of the day, while isolated displays of gallantry might for a time have checked the progress of the French, still the final issue of the contest seemed fraught with danger to the British general. Wellington's right was turned—his divisions separated—a murderous combat raging on his left in Fuentes, and to secure success, it was imperative that his outflanked wing should be instantly thrown back, and his communications with the bridge of Sabugal abandoned. "Looking with just confidence rather to victory than to any likelihood of retreating, he drew in the right of his army, sending the 7th Division over the Turon to Grenada, on its left bank." The light division, covered by the cavalry, retired over the plain—and the 1st, 3rd, and Portuguese formed line nearly at right angles with their first position, now resting their battalions upon the height which ran perpendicularly with Fuentes, their left being still pivoted on that village.

To effect this delicate change of formation was indeed a perilous essay ; one which a master-spirit only dare adopt, and one which might be intrusted alone to British soldiers. To retire troops across a level plain, the outer flank having a surface of four miles to traverse, surrounded by heavy masses of French cavalry, flushed with the full assurance of approaching victory, and waiting a false movement to fall on, was certainly a daring resolution. Far as the eye could range, the plateau was crowded with camp-followers and equipage. These fugitives added to the confusion, and consequently increased the risks ; "and if any of the divisions had given way, the enemy would have burst in upon them with such force, as would have sent the disorderly multitude headlong against some of its own squares, and thrown the whole into irreparable confusion."

"But in that dread hour, perhaps the most perilous of the whole war for England, she was saved by the skill of her chief and the incomparable valour of her soldiers. Slowly, and in perfect order, the squares of the 1st, 7th, and light divisions, retired for many miles, flanked on either side by the terrible cuirassiers of Montbrun, flushed with the newly won glories of Wagram ; pressed in rear by the columns and batteries of Ney's corps, which had broken the Russian army at Friedland. In vain their thundering squadrons swept round these serried bands, and the light of the British bayonets was, for a time, lost in the blaze of the French cuirasses ; from every throng the unbroken squares still emerged, pursuing their steady way amidst a terrific fire ; the 7th Division successfully accomplished its long semicircular sweep, crossed the Turon, and took up

its ground between that stream and the Coa ; the centre of the army soon gained the ridge of heights for which it was destined : while the left, with invincible firmness, still made good the crags and chapel of Fuentes d'Oñoro. When the whole had taken up their ground, Massena recoiled from the prospect of attacking such an enemy as he had now combated, posted in dense masses on a ridge not two miles in length, and covered on either flank by a steep ravine ; and, confining himself to a cannonade along its front, redoubled his efforts on the left, where he sent the whole division of Drouet against the village of Fuentes d'Oñoro."

The attack was made with all that reckless desperation, which indicated that on success or failure the fortunes of a doubtful day were staked. Every arm was used—cavalry appeared waiting an opportunity to act—infantry burst into the lower village in heavy masses—and while the French artillery poured a storm of shot upon the houses and enclosures, the enemy advanced with imposing steadiness, although their passage led through a street choked with the dead and dying, who had already perished in vain but reiterated attempts. The British regiments, far over-matched in numbers, were gradually forced back upon the heights and chapel, after sustaining a heavy loss, two companies of the 79th having been taken, and Colonel Cameron slain. But beyond the upper village no effort of the enemy could drive its gallant defenders. In vain the French were frequently and strongly reinforced, until the entire of the 6th, and a part of Count d'Erlon's corps were engaged. Lord Wellington, in turn, sent in his reserves, and the assault and defence were on both sides obstinately continued, the fortune of the day alternating as fresh combatants took part in the affray. "At one time the fighting was on the banks of the stream and amongst the lower houses ; at another upon the rugged heights and round the chapel, and some of the enemy's skirmishers even penetrated completely through towards the main position."

For a moment the upper village seemed lost. A heavy column followed the tirailleurs closely—and, unchecked by a well-directed fusillade, the enemy crowned the chapel ridge, and announced with loud cheers that Fuentes was at last their own. That triumph was a short one. Colonel Mackinnon directed the British battalions to advance, and gallantly that order was obeyed. Supported by the 71st and 79th, Colonel Wallace led his own regiment on ; and his brief address—

"At them, Eighty-eighth!" was answered with the soul-stirring huzza, with which an Irish regiment rushes to the onset. The Imperial Guard waited and received the charge—bayonet crossed bayonet—and the combatants fought hand to hand. But it was the struggle of a moment, and the best soldiers of France gave way before the Connaught Rangers. In the awful shock, many were impaled and lifted fairly from the ground; while broken, trodden down, and slaughtered, the routed enemy were forced in wild disorder by the Irish and Highland soldiers through the same street by which, in all the confidence of approaching victory, they had so recently and gallantly advanced.

The French loss was never accurately given. It was erroneously estimated after the action at little short of five thousand *hors de combat*, but probably half the amount would come nearer to the truth. The French absurdly stated their casualties at four hundred—and one circumstance alone would prove that this was ridiculously incorrect, as five hundred of their dead and wounded horses were left upon the battle-ground.

"Evening closed the combat. Massena's columns on the right were halted, and his sixth corps, with which he had endeavoured to storm Fuentes d'Oñoro, was withdrawn—the whole French army bivouacking in the order in which they had stood when the engagement closed. The British lighted their fires, posted their pickets, and occupied the field they had so bravely held; and 'both parties lay down to rest, with a confident assurance on their minds, that the battle was only intermitted till the return of daylight.'

"A brigade of the light division relieved the gallant defenders of Fuentes—and preparatory to the expected renewal of attack, some works were thrown up to defend the upper village and the ground behind it. But these precautions were unnecessary; Massena remained during the next day in front of his antagonist, but exhibited no anxiety to renew the combat. The 7th found the British, as usual, under arms at dawn, but the day passed as quietly as the preceding one had done. On the 8th, the French columns were observed in full retreat, marching on the road to Ciudad Rodrigo; thus proving that the French marshal, with an army reinforced by every battalion and squadron he could collect from Gallicia and Castile, had been beaten by four divisions of the British army. With that unblushing assurance, however, for which the French marshals have been remarkable, defeat was tortured into conquest, and

Massena did not hesitate to call Fuentes d'Oñoro a victory. But the falsity was self-apparent—the avowed object for which the battle had been fought was unattained—he failed in succouring the beleaguered city—and Almeida was left to its fate."

Massena's retreat was instantly followed up by a closer blockade of that fortress, which he had avowedly crossed the Agueda to relieve ; and as it was known that the scanty supply of food within the walls of Almeida was almost exhausted, the fall of the city was deemed inevitable. Brennier, who had already distinguished himself at Vimeiro, where he had been wounded and taken prisoner, but subsequently exchanged, was governor ; and to a more trusty soldier the custody of a place of strength had never been confided.

Although fully expecting that the Prince of Essling would succeed in his operations, and oblige the blockading division to withdraw, Brennier, nevertheless, had mined the works, and made every preparation by which he might, if necessary, ruin the defences of the place. The heavy firing at Fuentes told him that a severe action had been fought. A day passed—no succour came ; and during the night a French private reached the fortress, having with wonderful sagacity eluded the sentries and pickets who were on duty. Tillet confirmed Brennier's suspicions that Massena had been seriously repulsed—and brought with him, at the same time, the Prince of Essling's order for the immediate evacuation of Almeida.

Every precaution had been taken by Lord Wellington to ensure the capture of the garrison ; and, at his own solicitation, to General Alexander Campbell the details of the investment, with ample means to effect it, were entrusted.

"Too great confidence, either upon the allied strength, or the weakness of the garrison, most probably led him to adopt an imperfect system of blockade, which led to mortifying results. His dispositions were entirely erroneous. It is true that the right face of Almeida was vigilantly watched—but there no movements could have been made with any prospect of succeeding. The left unfortunately was neglected—and the banks of the Agueda, and bridge at Barba de Puerco, on the direct route to the French outposts, were left unguarded. This oversight was generally noticed ; and though the blockade of the fortress had been in the first instance unreservedly confided to Campbell, the faulty method of his dispositions obliged Lord Wellington to order the division of Sir William Erskine to

march and observe the left face of Almeida, while a battalion was ordered to the bridge. But this was not effected in proper time; and a delay in the transmission of the orders produced a very annoying event, and enabled the French garrison to get away."

For two days Brennier continued his work of destruction; and it was effected with so much cleverness, that frequent explosions attracted no particular attention from the blockaders. At midnight of the 10th, all being ripe for the attempt, the mines were fired—and by moonlight the garrison issued from the fortress in solid columns, bayoneting any sentries whom they encountered, and passing between the quarters of the reserves with a precision that seemed unaccountable.

The partial escape of the garrison of Almeida was, in every point of view, a most annoying and discreditable occurrence. "It seemed as if, by this untoward event," says a staff officer, "all the advantages obtained by the battle of Fuentes d'Oñoro were thrown away. Not that we very deeply regretted the escape of the individuals: they were brave men, had made a bold venture, and deserved that it should be crowned with success; but it was mortifying to reflect that now Massena might, with some show of reason, speak of his late operations as a victory, and not as a defeat. He might, in a specious manner, inform Europe that he had manœuvred merely for the purpose of bringing off the garrison of Almeida; and as the garrison had actually escaped, how could we contradict him? It is not worth while to dwell longer on this affair; but I will venture to affirm that no one who witnessed the effect this disappointment produced upon our army will ever be able to forget it."

Immediately after the battle of Fuentes d'Oñoro, the Prince of Essling, with Ney, Junot, and Loison, returned to France, leaving the army of Portugal in cantonments on the Tormes, under the command of Marmont, Duke of Ragusa. At the same time intelligence reached Lord Wellington, which induced him to repair instantly to Elvas; and while Massena was hastening towards the Pyrenees, his successful opponent was hurrying to the Guadiana, and travelling at the rate of sixty miles a day, without baggage or impediments of any description, arrived in Elvas before dark on the 19th. Whilst performing this arduous journey, a variety of rumours relative to late transactions met him at every stage. At one place it was stated that the enemy were coming on in force, and that a battle might

hourly be expected ; at another, that Marshal Beresford had resolved upon a retreat, not feeling himself equal to oppose the French ; and, at a third, that a great action had been fought, and that it had ended in favour of the allies. "It will readily be imagined," says the narrator, "that the last rumour, though it entered in no respect into particulars, tended, in no slight degree, to elevate our spirits, and quicken our pace. On reaching Elvas, however, more accurate details were given ; for Colonel Arbuthnot, from the marshal's head-quarters, met us here, and from him we received an official account of one of the most obstinate, as well as sanguinary actions, in which British troops were ever engaged."

When Soult was fortifying Seville he had no fears for the safety of Andalusia, but, determining to raise the siege of Badajoz, he wished to deceive Beresford, and thus induce a false security. On the first tidings, however, of his advance, the marshal, contrary to the advice of his engineers, exercised a sound discretion and raised the siege.

At an interview at Valverde with the Spanish generals, on the 13th—the intelligence of the rapid approach of the Duke of Dalmatia having been confirmed—it was unanimously determined that a battle should be risked ; and Albuera having been selected as the best position, Blake undertook that the detached divisions of the Spanish army should be concentrated there before noon of the 15th.

The village of Albuera is a street of mean houses, with a church, situated on a little river, from which it is named. This village is traversed by the high road leading from Seville to Badajoz, which, about two hundred yards to the right, crosses the river by a handsome bridge of stone. Immediately to the left of Albuera, and just below the rough and rising ground on which it stands, there is another bridge, of unhewn stone, old, narrow, and incommodious. The river, in summer, is not above knee-deep. Its banks, to the left of the old bridge, and directly in front of the village, are very abrupt and difficult ; but to the right of the main bridge the passage of the stream is easy for all arms.

The position chosen by the allied leaders was an undulating ridge, having the Albuera river in its front and the Arroya in its rear. The extreme extent might be four miles. A rivulet called the Ferdia unites itself immediately above the village with the Albuera ; and the intermediate surface, and the whole country beyond the larger stream, are thickly, but dispersedly,

covered with ilex trees, a species of wood sufficient to conceal the formation, but not interrupt the movements of an army.

The Portuguese brigades were on the left; the British in the centre; and the cavalry in the rear. The allied force amounted to thirty thousand men, of whom about two thousand were cavalry. Of these, nearly one-half were Spanish troops; the remainder, British and Portuguese, in nearly an equal proportion.

In gross numbers the French marshal was inferior to his opponent; in infantry, he was weaker by a third; but in the other arms, dangerously superior. He brought four thousand cavalry and fifty heavy guns into action; all were French troops; and all consequently, admirable soldiers. In every requisite Soult's *corps d'armée* was complete: and, save his master, few could employ it more skilfully, and none with more promptitude and determination.

After a careful reconnaissance on the evening of the 15th, the Duke of Dalmatia selected the right of the allies as the object for his greatest effort. Favoured by the darkness, he lodged Girard's corps, Ruty's artillery, and the cavalry of Latour Maubourg, in the wood; and when morning broke, a powerful force was already formed in close column, and perfectly concealed, though within ten minutes' march of the Spanish line.

"The enemy, on the morning of the 16th, did not long delay his attack. At eight o'clock he was observed to be in movement, and his cavalry was seen passing the rivulet of Albuera, considerably above our right; and shortly after he marched out of the wood opposite to us a strong force of cavalry, and two heavy columns of infantry, pointing them to our front, as if to attack the village and bridge of Albuera. During this time, under cover of his vastly superior cavalry, he was filing the principal body of his infantry over the river beyond our right; and it was not long before his intention appeared to be to turn us by that flank, and to cut us off from Valverde."

On perceiving that the right was seriously menaced, Beresford had sent Colonel Hardinge to request that Blake would change his front. But the Spanish general doggedly insisted that the village was the true object of attack, and refused to correct his alignment. The marshal rode in person to the right; and as the French columns were now observed in rapid march, "yielding to this evidence, Blake proceeded to make the evolution, yet with such pedantic slowness that Beresford, impatient of his folly, took the direction himself."

But before the change could be effected, the day might have been considered by Beresford as lost! "Two-thirds of the French were in a compact order of battle on a line perpendicular to his right, and his army, disordered and composed of different nations, was still in the difficult act of changing its front. It was in vain that he endeavoured to form the Spanish line sufficiently in advance to give room for the 2nd Division to support it; the French guns opened, their infantry threw out a heavy musketry, and their cavalry, outflanking the front and charging here and there, put the Spaniards in disorder at all points; in a short time the latter gave way, and Soult, thinking the whole army was yielding, pushed forward his columns, while his reserves also mounted the hill, and General Ruty placed all the batteries in position."

Seeing the desperate state of affairs, General William Stewart bravely, but rashly, endeavoured to restore the battle; and pushing his brigade up the hill, he mounted, for greater despatch, by columns of companies. But as the regiments were endeavouring to open into line, each as it crowned the ridge in the loose order it had advanced in, the French light cavalry, under cover of a heavy shower of rain, passed round the right flank of the brigade, and came in a thundering onset direct upon their rear. A sad slaughter ensued—and every regiment, except the 31st, which fortunately had not begun to deploy, was literally cut to pieces. The lancers galloped right and left; spearing men without mercy who could neither escape, nor, from confusion and surprise, offer an effective resistance; while the Spaniards, regardless that their fire was falling fast upon the English ranks, kept up an unabating fusillade—but when ordered to advance, and succour men who were perishing through the brave but rash celerity with which they had rushed to their assistance, no power could move them forward.

Happily the weather cleared; and the distressed brigade was observed by General Lumley, who rode at speed to the rescue. The British cavalry charged nobly. In turn, the lancers were taken in the rear; and numbers of these desperadoes fell beneath the sabres of the English horsemen.

The mist which had favoured this sanguinary charge, averted also in a great degree the fatal consequences it must have otherwise produced. Soult, from the obscurity of the weather, could not see the battle-field with sufficient clearness to allow him to push forward his infantry, and consummate the destruction of a brigade already half exterminated. The

31st Regiment steadily maintained its ground—the British artillery came up—Houghton's brigade cleared the hill and deployed in beautiful order—two Spanish regiments were brought forward,—and the battle was restored.

Though for a moment checked, the French soon renewed their efforts to break the English line ; but the British regiments stood with a stubborn gallantry that refused to yield an inch. On both sides, the batteries poured torrents of grape at half range, and the roar of musketry was incessant. Upon the close formation of the French, the storm fell with terrible violence—whole sections fell—but still these noble soldiers remained unshaken by this crushing fire ; and their reserves were coming rapidly up. A column appeared already moving round the right flank of the British,—ammunition failed,—their fusillade gradually became feebler,—the lancers charged again, and a battery was taken. That moment was the crisis. To retreat, was Beresford's first thought,—orders were being issued to commence it,—when Colonel Hardinge saw that the battle might yet be won—and, without having obtained the marshal's permission, he ordered the 4th Division and a brigade of the 2nd to advance, and thus redeemed the fortunes of a day which all besides thought desperate.

"In a few minutes more the remnant of the British must have abandoned the hill or perished. The French reserve was on its march to assist the front column of the enemy, while with the allies all was in confusion ; and as if the slaughter required increase, a Spanish and English regiment were firing in mutual error upon each other. Six guns were in possession of the French, and their lancers, riding furiously over the field, threatened the feeble remnant of the British still in line, and speared the wounded without mercy. At this fearful moment the boundless gallantry of British officers displayed itself ; Colonel Arbuthnot, under the double musketry, rushed between the mistaken regiments, and stopped the firing ; Cole pushed up the hill, scattered the lancers, recovered the guns, and passed the right of the skeleton of Houghton's brigade, at the same instant that Abercrombie appeared upon its left. Leaving the broken regiments in its rear, the fusileer brigade came forward with imposing gallantry, and boldly confronted the French, now reinforced by a part of its reserve, and who were, as they believed, coming forward to annihilate the 'feeble few' that had still survived the murderous contest. From the daring attitude of the fresh regiments, Soult perceived too late that the battle

was not yet won ; and, under a tremendous fire of artillery, he endeavoured to break up his close formation and open out his front. For a moment the storm of grape, poured from Ruty's well-served artillery, staggered the fusileers,—but it was only for a moment. Though Soult rushed into the thickest of the fire, and encouraged and animated his men,—though the cavalry gathered on their flank and threatened it with destruction—on went those noble regiments ; volley after volley falling into the crowded ranks of their enemy, and cheer after cheer pealing to heaven, in answer to the clamorous outcry of the French as the boldest urged the others forward.

"Nothing could check the fusileers ; they kept gradually advancing, while the incessant rolling of their musketry slaughtered the crowded sections of the French, and each moment embarrassed more and more Soult's efforts to open out his encumbered line. The enemy's reserve coming forward to support their comrades, was forced to the very edge of the plateau, and increased the crowd without remedying the disorder. The English volleys rolled on faster and more deadly than ever—a horrid carnage making all attempts to hold the hill vain, and thus uselessly increased an unavailing slaughter. Unable to bear the withering fire, the shattered columns of the French were no longer able to sustain themselves,—the mass were driven over the ridge,—and trampling each other down, the shattered column sought refuge at the bottom of the hill.

"On that bloody height stood the conquerors. From 1,500 muskets a parting volley fell upon the the routed column as it hurried down the height. Where was the remainder of the proud array of England, which on the morning had exceeded 6,000 combatants !—Stretched coldly in the sleep of death, or bleeding on the battle-ground !"

That such continued and desperate fighting must cause an enormous loss may be readily imagined. Besides 2,000 Spaniards and 500 Germans and Portuguese placed *hors de combat*, the British casualties amounted to 4,407 ; an enormous loss when it is remembered that little more than 6,500 English soldiers were actually on the battle-ground. Almost all the field officers were killed or wounded. Houghton died, cheering his men on ; and Myers and Duckworth, at the heads of their respective regiments. Stewart, Cole, Inglis, Ellis, Blakeney, and Hawkeshaw, were wounded. Few regiments could muster in the evening a third of the number with which they went into action ; and the loss sustained by the 57th—known afterwards

by the sobriquet of "Die-hards"—stands without a parallel. Its strength, when led into fire, was about five hundred and seventy bayonets; and its casualties, at two o'clock, were twenty-three officers, and above four hundred rank and file.

Both armies claimed a victory; but the title rested indubitably with the allies. Soult was master of a howitzer, some stands of colours, and 500 prisoners, of whom the greater proportion rejoined their regiments within a fortnight. Beresford remained upon the battle-field, from which his assailant had been deforced, and his trophies were sad but certain attendants on success—the bodies of the slain, and numbers of maimed unfortunates, too badly wounded to bear removal. Soult's total loss exceeded 8,000 men; and, in common with the British, the French field officers suffered heavily. Two generals were killed, and three wounded; while a thousand of the enemy lay disabled on the heights; "and horrid piles of carcases within their lines told, with dreadful eloquence, who were the conquerors."

The personal bravery of both generals was boundless; and both were seen throughout the day, wherever the battle raged most furiously. By voice and gestures Soult urged his soldiers forward; and when they finally recoiled from the slaughtering volleys of the fusileers, to the last the French marshal was observed "in the battle's front," using brave, but vain attempts to rally and renew the combat. "During the hottest of the action, Marshal Beresford exposed himself with a degree of intrepidity, which could hardly fail of spreading an example of heroism around. The person of the general-in-chief was indeed seen everywhere, a gallant soldier!" He repeatedly dragged the Spanish officers from their ranks, compelling them to lead their men forward, and show them the way; and when individually charged by a Polish lancer, he grappled his adversary by the throat, threw him from the saddle, and an orderly dragoon despatched him.

On the 21st, Lord Wellington rode over the field of battle, examined the position carefully, and expressed himself as perfectly satisfied with all that had occurred. In a letter written next day he thus makes honourable mention of the battle:

"You will have heard of the marshal's action on the 16th: the fighting was desperate, and the loss of the British has been very severe; but, adverting to the nature of the contest, and the manner in which they held their ground against all the efforts the whole French army could make against them, not-

withstanding all the losses which they had sustained, I think this action one of the most glorious and honourable to the character of the troops of any that has been fought during the war."

Immediately on the arrival of the 3rd and 7th Divisions, the siege of Badajoz was actively resumed. On the left bank of the Guadiana the investment had been commenced by General Hamilton on the 19th. That on the right was effected on the 25th by the 7th Division, under Major-General Houstoun ; and on the 27th Picton forded the river above the fortress, and united the 3rd Division with the Portuguese corps already before the place.

CHAPTER XIV

The superiority of Lord Wellington's strength upon the Guadiana, he was well aware, could be but temporary, and Badajoz must fall at once, or not at all. The place was too important for the French to allow it to be lost without making strenuous exertions for its deliverance. Marmont, no doubt, would move with all his disposable force upon the Tagus ; and Soult, more formidable than ever from the large reinforcements which had joined him, would easily effect a junction with the army of Portugal, and thus complete a magnificent *corps d'armée*, too powerful in every arm for anything which Lord Wellington could oppose to it.

Nor could the siege be immediately commenced. The battering-train had been injured so much in its hasty removal to Elvas, that by the engineer's report, eleven days would be necessary to repair the carriages, and render the guns serviceable.

Limited in time, and crippled in everything required for carrying a siege through, Lord Wellington endeavoured to overcome by energy and daring disadvantages from which others would have shrunk at once. On the 3rd, his batteries opened. On the 6th, San Christoval was assaulted without success. Again, upon the evening of the 9th, the trial was made and proved unfortunate ; and on the 10th the siege was raised.

That the siege of Badajoz should fail, was an event for which Lord Wellington was prepared ; and his official correspondence shows that the result of the attempt was always considered by himself as more than doubtful. He had few attached to the

army who knew aught of engineering. Sappers and miners he had none, and a large proportion of his gunners were Portuguese, men full of zeal and gallantry, but sadly wanting in experience. That Badajoz was besieged contrary to the rules of obsolete warfare must be conceded. It is a military maxim that a siege, provided there be time and means, is the only certain operation which a general can engage in. Wellington failed because he wanted both ; but even that failure enhanced his reputation. An officer, probably more competent than any to estimate Lord Wellington's plans and prospects of success, thus offers his opinion.

"The most critical examination of the operations of this siege will not allow of blame for its failure being thrown on any one. From the general to the soldier each did his duty ; nor should want of success discredit the original project. It must be admitted that there was a judicious application of all the means that could be collected for the reduction of Christoval. On trial those means proved insufficient ; many of the causes of their insufficiency could not have been foreseen, and others, if foreseen, could not have been remedied ; all that skill and bravery could effect was done."

In the meantime the movements of the French marshals were clearly developed. The flank position taken by the Duke of Dalmatia at Llerena had already convinced Lord Wellington that Badajoz was his dearest object, and that he only waited for reinforcements to assume an offensive attitude on the Guadiana. On the 14th Drouet joined Soult, and both generals moved forward to Fuente del Maestro, while Hill with the covering army took post on the heights of Albuera. Marmont simultaneously commenced his operations by despatching Regnier with two divisions through the pass of Banos, while with the remainder of his *corps d'armée* he advanced to Ciudad Rodrigo, protecting an immense convoy destined for the use of that fortress.

Marmont's true line of march was the Tagus ; and while Regnier directed his route by the passes of Banos and Bejar, the French marshal moved through that of Perales, and the whole united at the bridge of Almaraz.

The position of the allies was chosen with admirable judgment. It embraced a surface of scarcely four leagues, the right extending to the lower bridge of the Caya, and the left appuied upon the heights over the Gevora, and protected by the fortress of Campo Mayor. The nature of the ground effectually masked the

dispositions of the allied brigades from observation by the enemy, while excellent communications enabled Lord Wellington to move the mass of his army with celerity on any threatened point; and from the flatness of the country round Badajoz, any hostile movement was discernible from Fort La Lippe and the numerous watch towers which stud the Portuguese frontier.

It was necessary, indeed, that the strength of his position should compensate for Lord Wellington's numerical inferiority. The united army in his front outnumbered him in every arm, comprising 63,000 infantry, 7,500 cavalry, and 90 pieces of cannon; consequently the allied general was weaker in infantry by 10,000, while in cavalry and artillery the French marshals exceeded him nearly by one half.

For a month the French marshals remained together; their numerous cavalry scouring the face of the country to an immense extent, and wasting it of everything that was convertible into sustenance for either men or horses. At last, these precarious supplies failed altogether; and Soult and Marmont retired from Estremadura,—the latter marching northwards, and the former falling back upon Seville.

The recession of the French armies produced an immmediate change in the positions of the allies; and Lord Wellington, leaving Hill in the Alentejo in observation of Girard, changed his head-quarters from the Quinta de St. Joaô to Portalegre, and subsequently to Fuente Guinaldo. The occupation of the line of the Coa was highly desirable; it placed the posts and villages in the more immediate vicinity of Ciudad Rodrigo in the possession of the allied commander, and thus cut off all casual supplies from a fortress, already straitened by the guerillas of Julian Sanchez, and separated from its covering army by a space of fifty miles. In fact, Rodrigo was the object at which Lord Wellington had secretly aimed; and measures had been taken to get up a powerful siege train from Lisbon, and forward all necessary arrangements for the immediate reduction of a fortress, which he justly considered in a military point of view, to be invaluable.

In the meantime, the strength of the French generals was hourly increasing; for between the middle of July and the end of September, 50,000 fresh troops had entered Spain, of whom above 8,000 were cavalry, and all veteran soldiers. All these circumstances rendered any offensive movement of Lord Wellington a most dangerous experiment; and accordingly, he

announced to Lord Liverpool, that he had abandoned the intention he had previously communicated of engaging in a siege.

"I am almost certain," he says, "I shall not be able to attack Ciudad Rodrigo, and I think it is doubtful whether I shall be able to maintain the blockade of that place. However, I shall not give up my intention until I am certain that the enemy are too strong for me in an action in the field.

"However, there is one thing very clear, that if we cannot maintain this blockade, the enemy must bring 50,000 men to oblige us to raise it; and they can undertake nothing else this year, for they must still continue to watch this place, and we shall so far save the cause. In the meantime, if they offer me a favourable opportunity of bringing any of them to action, I shall do it."

The consequences Lord Wellington expected to result from his presence on the frontier were speedily realised. While he remained upon the Coa, the efforts of the French marshals were completely paralysed; and, with immense means, they found themselves unable to effect commensurate objects, because these means were not disposable. Distant services they dared not undertake; for if they ventured to detach troops, they feared, with good reason, that Ciudad Rodrigo would be instantly besieged; and unless the blockade could be broken, and supplies safely and speedily introduced, the place could not hold out for any length of time. To effect the latter, a grand junction of the armies under Marmont, Souham, and Dorsenne was determined; and having collected large convoys at Plasencia and Salamanca, the united force assembled at Tamamers on the 22nd, having previously apprised the Governor of Rodrigo that the fortress would be relieved.

This junction of the French corps produced a magnificent army. Their total strength was over sixty thousand men, of which the cavalry might be reckoned at nearly seven thousand, and the artillery comprised one hundred and ten guns. A finer army for its numbers was never ranged beneath the eagles of Napoleon; for all the reinforcements were veteran soldiers, and of these a large proportion had been detached from the Imperial Guard.

Save one, no modern life has been so brilliant or so eventful as that of him happily surnamed "the Iron Duke." Like Napoleon's, "his crowded hours of glorious strife" followed fast upon each other, each sufficient in itself to support a

claim for immortality. Yet, probably, throughout that sparkling career, from its opening at Assye until its close at Waterloo, there is no hour on which the memory of Wellington will dwell with greater pride, than that when he looked calmly from the heights of Guinaldo on sixty thousand magnificent soldiers in battle order, within cannon range of his position.

In the progress of a campaign situations of interest or beauty are not unfrequent—and nothing could be more striking than the first appearance of the united armies, as they advanced to the relief of Ciudad Rodrigo. Far as the eye could range, the roads from Salamanca and Tamames were crowded with dense masses of sparkling soldiery, "accompanied by a countless number of waggons, cars, and loaded mules. Their progress was slow, and apparently cautious; but towards evening the convoy began to enter the place under cover of about fifteen squadrons of cavalry, which passed the Agueda, and a large column of infantry, which halted upon the plain. Still no symptoms were manifested of a design to cross the river in force, or to attempt anything further than the object which was thus attained; for the advanced cavalry withdrew at dusk, and all bivouacked that night near the town. In the morning, however, as soon as objects became discernible, one corps of cavalry, amounting to at least five-and-twenty squadrons, supported by a whole division of infantry, appeared in motion along the great road, which, leading from Ciudad Rodrigo to Guinaldo, leaves El Bodon on the left; whilst another, less numerous, perhaps, but, like the former, strongly supported by infantry, marched direct upon Espeja. They both moved with admirable steadiness and great regularity; and as the sun happened to be out, and the morning clear and beautiful, their appearance was altogether warlike and imposing."

It was a moment when the boldest spirit might have felt alarm. Advanced upon a naked height, the allies at El Bodon were isolated and unsupported; for, from necessity, the British brigades were widely separated from each other. To hold the height was their best hope; for to retire over an extensive plain in the presence of an overwhelming cavalry force, supported by light artillery, would have been an attempt too perilous for any but desperate men to risk. The danger of their position was apparent to all; none blanched from the trial, and with fearless intrepidity, they waited for the French assault.

"While squadron after squadron were defiling along the road, the English infantry remained in columns of battalions behind

the ridge, and the cavalry stood dismounted, each dragoon with the bridle on his arm, and apparently as careless to coming events, as if he were on the parade-ground of his barrack, waiting for the trumpet call to "fall in." But when the advanced squadrons were about to mount the ridge, the infantry formed line; the dragoons sprang to their saddles; and the artillery, which had occasionally cannonaded the hostile squadrons as they came within their range, opened with additional spirit, and poured from the height a torrent of grape and case shot, that occasioned a serious loss to the enemy.

"The French appeared to feel sensibly the effect produced by the fire, and a brigade cheered and charged up the heights. The men stood by their guns to the last, but eventually they were obliged to retire. The French dragoons gained the battery, and the cannon were taken.

"Their possession by the enemy was but for a moment. The 5th Regiment came steadily forward in line, and after delivering a shattering volley, lowered their bayonets, and boldly advanced to charge the cavalry. This—the first instance of horsemen being assailed by infantry in line—was brilliantly successful. The French were hurried down the height, and the guns re-captured, limbered up, and brought away."

But valour could not maintain the height against numbers so fearfully disproportionate. A heavy column had moved unnoticed round the rear of the British right, and the position being turned was abandoned. Now was the moment to effect their destruction; for the British infantry were in rapid retreat, and the French squadrons, in all the assurance of success, coming down at speed to annihilate them.

"But they had yet to learn of what stern stuff the British soldier is composed. In a moment the 5th and 77th formed square, and in steady silence awaited the coming onset. The charge was made—the cheering of the dragoons pealed over the battle-field as they came on at speed, and with a fiery determination that nothing apparently could withstand. Against every face of the square a hostile squadron galloped; the earth shook—the cheers rose louder—another moment of that headlong speed must bring the dragoons upon the bayonets of the kneeling front rank. Then from the British square a shattering volley was poured in,—the smoke cleared away, and, but a few yards from the faces of the square, men and horses were rolling on the plain in death. The charge was repulsed, the ranks disordered; and the French dragoons, recoiling from

that fearless array they had vainly striven to penetrate, rode hastily off to re-form their broken ranks, and remove themselves from an incessant stream of musketry which had already proved so fatal."

The retreat of the right brigade was conducted by Picton in person ; and the same daring, the same skill, and the same good fortune attended it. The whole of these gallant regiments united on the plain, and fell back on Guinaldo, which, with Cole's division, they occupied.

The position was not particularly good ; and as one of much greater strength lay immediately in his rear, Lord Wellington issued orders for the troops to retire from Guinaldo, and take up ground he had previously selected on the Coa. From delay in the transmission of that order to the light brigade, and General Craufurd considering, when it did arrive, that it would be hazardous to ford the Agueda then, he determined to cross the mountains, and join the main body by a circuitous route, being ignorant that the passes of Gata and Perales were already in possession of the French. Lord Wellington despatched instant orders for the division to countermarch upon Robleda ; and strengthening both flanks of his position with 13,000 infantry and 2,500 horsemen, he remained boldly on Guinaldo.

The night of the 25th, to some who knew how critically Lord Wellington was situated, passed in anxiety and suspense—but the soldiery, wearied with the exertions they had made during the day, slept soundly in their dangerous bivouacs. Fires blazed along the allied line, and every appearance bore the semblance of confidence and defiance.

"Long before dawn, however, all were astir and in their places ; and the different regiments looked anxiously for the moment which should behold the commencement of a game as desperate as any which they had been yet called upon to play. But, instead of indulging our troops as they expected, Marmont contented himself with making an exhibition of his force, and causing it to execute a variety of manœuvres in our presence ; and it must be confessed that a spectacle more striking has rarely been seen. The large body of cavalry which followed us to our position, and had bivouacked during the night in the woods adjoining, were first drawn up in compact array, as if waiting for the signal to push on. By-and-by, nine battalions of infantry, attended by a proportionate quantity of artillery, made their appearance, and formed into columns, lines, echelons,

and squares. Towards noon, twelve battalions of the Imperial Guard came upon the ground in one solid mass; and as each soldier was decked out with feathers and shoulder-knots of a bloody hue, their appearance was certainly imposing in no ordinary degree. The solid column, however, soon deployed into columns of battalions—a movement which was executed with a degree of quickness and accuracy quite admirable: and then, after having performed several other evolutions with equal precision, the Guards piled their arms, and prepared to bivouac. Next came another division of infantry in rear of the Guards, and then a fresh column of cavalry, till it was computed that the enemy had collected on this single point a force of not less than 25,000 men. Nor did the muster cease to go on, as long as daylight lasted. To the very latest moment, we could observe men, horses, guns, carriages, tumbrils, and ammunition-waggons, flocking into the encampment; as if it were the design of the French general to bring his whole disposable force to bear against the position of Fuente Guinaldo."

Indeed the salvation of the light division was achieved by Wellington, when old-school commanders would have abandoned it in despair. "The object was certainly one of an importance sufficient to justify the resolution, but the resolution itself was one of those daring strokes of genius which the ordinary rules of art were never made to control. The position was contracted, of no great natural strength in front, and easily to be turned; the entrenchments constructed were only a few breast-works and two weak field redoubts, open in rear, and without palisades."

While Marmont was amusing himself with this singular review, Lord Wellington looked on with the calmness of an ordinary spectator. Scarcely a third of the allied army was within his reach; and sixty thousand troops, some of them hitherto unconquered, with one hundred and ten pieces of artillery, manœuvring barely out of cannon range. "It was at this moment that a Spanish general, remarkable for his zeal and gallantry, and a great favourite of Wellington's, observed to him—'Why, here you are with a couple of weak divisions in front of the whole French army, and you seem quite at your ease;—why, it is enough to put any man in a fever.'—'I have done, according to the very best of my judgment, all that can be done,' said Wellington; 'therefore I care not either for the enemy in front, or for anything which they may say at home.'"

But Marmont allowed the golden opportunity to pass. Dur-

ing the night Wellington retreated, united his scattered brigades in their new position, and then courted rather than declined a battle. The affairs at Aldea da Ponte showed that no impression could be made ; and having exhausted their provisions, the French armies retired on the 28th, covered by a cavalry rear-guard, far too powerful in numbers for Lord Wellington to molest.

When Marmont was assured that his formidable opponent had lain for six-and-thirty hours in his front, like Samson, shorn of his strength, nothing could surpass his astonishment save the mortification which it caused. The mischief was, however, attributed by the French marshal to planetary influence ; and he somewhat prophetically exclaimed, that "Wellington's star was brilliant as Napoleon's !"

CHAPTER XV

The secret object which had occupied Lord Wellington's mind so long, was now about to be disclosed, for all the preparations for the siege of Rodrigo were complete, and preliminary measures already taken for an immediate investment of the fortress. Gallegos, Villa del Ciervo, and Espeja had been made entrepôts for the siege stores ; while Almeida formed the grand magazine for the battering train and ammunition.

Considering the season of the year, and the nakedness of the country for many miles around the threatened fortress, the intended operation was bold to a degree. The horses had scarcely any forage, and the men were literally destitute of bread or shelter. The new year came in inclemently—rain fell in torrents —and though the investment was delayed two days, one brigade that marched from Aldea da Ponte, left nearly four hundred men behind, in a route of only four-and-twenty miles, numbers of whom perished on the line of march, or died subsequently of fatigue.

Since the French had obtained possession of the place, they had made very judicious additions to its defences. Three convents, situated in the centre and on either flank of the suburbs, had been fortified, while that of Santa Cruz, at the north-west angle of the glacis, had been converted into an infantry post. A small redoubt had been also erected on the upper Teson, supported by the fire of the convent of San Francisco, from

which it was distant about four hundred yards ; and this redoubt completely secured the northern front of Rodrigo from being assailed.

On January 8th, the light division forded the river at La Caridad, and formed the investment ; and the engineers' stores were brought across the Agueda by the bridge, and parked 1,800 yards from the fortress. During the day everything was kept as quiet as possible, and an equal examination made of every side of the town, so as to prevent any suspicion of an immediate effort being intended, or betray to the garrison the point to be attacked.

At eight o'clock that evening the redoubt upon the upper Teson was carried by assault. The affair was gallantly effected by three companies of the 52nd, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Colborne, and conducted by Lieutenant Thomson. The loss was trifling, and the possession of the work was found of immediate value. "From the lodgment a distinct view was obtained of the defences of the place and of the intervening ground, and the commanding engineer was enabled to decide on the best trace for the parallel and the best sites for the batteries, and at dusk he picketed them out."

Until the 11th, the approaches were rapidly pushed forward, and the batteries and their magazines constructed. Some casualties occurred every day ; and at this period the garrison distinguishing the batteries from the other parts of the work, attained their range so precisely, that two thirds of their shells fell into them ; and their round shot caused many casualties, particularly amongst those at work in the ditch next the place, whenever they unthinkingly exposed themselves. In consequence of this, and some very destructive effects produced from shells exploding in the ditch amongst the workmen, who could not jump out in time to save themselves, the exterior excavation was discontinued altogether, and the interior of the batteries was directed to be sunken to the necessary depth to furnish earth for the parapets. About this time also the garrison adopted the expedient of firing shells filled with powder, and having long fuses in salvos. Some of these falling together into the parapets blew away in an instant the work of hours.

Intelligence in the meantime had been received that induced Lord Wellington to alter his system of attack. Marmont was collecting his detached divisions, and his avowed object being the relief of the place, Wellington determined to prevent it by

storming Rodrigo, without waiting to blow in the counter-scarp—"in other words, to overstep the rules of science, and sacrifice life rather than time ; for such was the capricious nature of the Agueda, that in one night a flood might enable a small French force to relieve the place."

The sortie, added to the opening and lining of the embrasures which the death of the acting engineer had embarrassed, delayed the breaching batteries from commencing their fire until half-past four in the afternoon. Then twenty-seven heavy guns opened ; they were promptly answered by every piece of artillery which the garrison could bring to bear ; and the united fire produced an effect more strikingly magnificent than it had been the ordinary good fortune of a British soldier to witness.

"The evening," says Lord Londonderry, "chanced to be remarkably beautiful and still ; there was not a cloud in the sky, nor a breath of wind astir, when suddenly the roar of artillery broke in upon its calmness, and volumes of smoke rose slowly from our batteries. These floating gently towards the town, soon enveloped the lower parts of the hill, and even the ramparts and bastions, in a dense veil ; whilst the towers and summits, lifting their heads over the haze, showed like fairy buildings, or those unsubstantial castles which are sometimes seen in the clouds on a summer's day. The flashes from our guns, answered as they promptly were from the artillery in the place, the roar of their thunder reverberating among the remote mountains of the Sierra de Francisca—these, with the rattle of balls against the masonry, and the occasional crash as portions of the wall gave way, proved altogether a scene which, to be rightly understood, must be experienced."

To the 19th, with the usual incidents that attend a siege, the besiegers continued to breach, and the garrison to offer the boldest and most scientific opposition. The irresistible fire of the British guns had gradually ruined that portion of the works against which its violence was directed. The convent of San Francisco had been already taken with little resistance by the 40th Regiment, the breaches rendered practicable, and a summons sent to the governor and declined.

A personal examination of the breaches confirmed Lord Wellington's previous opinion that the assault might be given with success ; and directing the fire of the breaching batteries to be turned against the guns upon the ramparts, he seated himself upon the reverse of an advanced approach, and wrote out the order of assault.

To the 3rd and light divisions the assault was confided by Lord Wellington ; and they marched from their cantonments to the more immediate vicinity of the trenches. A few minutes after six o'clock the 3rd moved to the rear of the first parallel, two gun-shots from the main breach,—while the light division formed behind a convent, three hundred yards in front of the smaller one. Darkness came on,—and with it came the order to "Stand to arms." With calm determination the soldiers of the 3rd Division heard their commanding officer announce the main breach as the object of attack, and every man prepared himself promptly for the desperate struggle. Off went the packs,—the stocks were unbuckled,—the cartouch-box arranged to meet the hand more readily,—flints were screwed home,—every one, after his individual fancy, fitting himself for action. The companies were carefully told off,—the sergeants called the rolls,—and not a man was missing !

The bell from the tower of the cathedral tolled seven ; and, in obedience to previous orders, the troops marched rapidly but silently to the assault. The 3rd Division, preceded by its storming party under Major Manners, a forlorn hope under Lieutenant Mackie, and accompanied by a body of sappers with hay-bags and ladders, made directly for the greater breach ; while the light division, led by Major George Napier, with three hundred volunteers, and a forlorn hope under Lieutenant Gurwood, were directed against the lesser one. A Portuguese brigade, commanded by General Pack, were to alarm the fortress on the opposite side, and threaten to escalade at the gate of St. Jago ; and, should circumstances warrant the attempt, convert a false attack into a real one.

No piece of clock-work, however nicely arranged, could obey the will of its maker more accurately than the different columns obeyed that night the wishes of their chief ; and his orders were, in consequence, executed at every point with the same precision and regularity as if he had been manœuvring so many battalions upon parade. For a few moments, the heavy tramp of many men put simultaneously into motion alone broke upon the solemn stillness of the evening. But, suddenly, a shout upon the right of the line nearest the bridge was heard ; it was taken up along the whole line of attack,—a spattering of musketry succeeded—the storming parties rushed forward to the breaches,—and the guns upon the ramparts opened with one tremendous crash, and told that the garrison were prepared for the assault and ready to repel it.

At the first alarm, the storming party of the 3rd Division advanced, and descended the ditch. At the bottom, a range of heavy shells had been placed with continued fuses ; but hurried by the suddenness of the attack, the French prematurely fired them, and their fury had fortunately expended itself before the assailants were close enough to suffer from a murderous explosion.

"General McKinnon's brigade instantly pushed up the breach, in conjunction with the 5th and 94th Regiments, which arrived at the same moment along the ditch from their right. The men mounted in a most gallant manner against an equally gallant resistance ; and it was not till after a sharp struggle of some minutes that the bayonets of the assailants prevailed, and gained them a footing on the summit of the rampart. The defenders then concentrated behind the retrenchment, which they obstinately maintained, and a second severe struggle commenced." The lesser breach was, at the same time, assaulted with equal intrepidity, but more decided success. The darkness of the ditch occasioned a momentary confusion, which the fall of the leading officers increased ; while the ardour of the light troops brought so many to the breach, that they choked its narrow aperture with their numbers. For a moment the assailants recoiled, but it was only to return more resolutely to the onset. A cheer was heard above the thunder of artillery,—up rushed the stormers,—the breach was gained,—the supporting regiments mounted in sections, formed on the rampart, the 52nd wheeling to the left, the 43rd to the right, —and that success alone would have decided the fate of Rodrigo.

Although the greater breach had been carried by the first rush, isolated by a rampart 12 feet deep in front, retrenched on either flank, and swept by the fire of a field-piece and musketry from the houses which overlooked and enfiladed it, the progress of the storming party was arrested, and men and officers fell fast. At this trying moment, the gallantry of an adventurous individual opened the gates of success. Mackie, who led the forlorn hope, dropping from the rampart into the town, discovered that the trench upon the right of the breach was cut quite across, and consequently, that an opening was left by which the assailants might get in. Reascending the top of the breach, he led the men through the trench into the street ; and the enemy, on their appearance, abandoned any further effort at defence and fled towards

the citadel. The false attack by the Portuguese, under General Pack, had been equally effective. They carried by escalade a small redan in front of the St. Jago gate, and of course, materially assisted in distracting the attention of the garrison by the alarm their movement had caused.

Thus terminated the struggle for Rodrigo. Some of the garrison still offered a useless opposition and were put to the sword, but any who demanded quarter, received it. From the great breach, Mackie, with a mixed party, reached the citadel; and his gallantry was rewarded by receiving there the submission of General Barrie and such of the garrison as it contained.

After all resistance had ceased, the usual scene of riot, plunder, and confusion, which by prescriptive right the stormers of a town enjoy, occurred. Every house was entered and despoiled; the spirit stores were forced open; the soldiery got desperately excited; and in the madness of their intoxication, committed many acts of silly and wanton violence. All plundered what they could, and in turn they were robbed by their own companions. Brawls and bloodshed resulted; and the same men who, shoulder to shoulder, had won their way over the "imminent deadly breach," fought with demoniac ferocity for some disputed article of plunder. At last, worn out by fatigue, and stupefied with brandy, they sank into brutal insensibility. On the second day, with few exceptions, the whole rejoined their regiments; the assault and sacking of Rodrigo appearing in their confused imaginations rather like some troubled dream than a sad reality of blood and violence.

The military importance of Ciudad Rodrigo rendered it a valuable conquest; and its capture placed in Lord Wellington's hands eighty French officers and 1,500 men. The arsenal was abundantly supplied; and besides the artillery of the place, consisting of one hundred and ten mounted guns, Marmont's battering train was taken with the fortress.

The splendid achievement of the conqueror of Rodrigo obtained an honourable requital. He was advanced, in Spain, to the rank of a grandee of the first order, with the title of Duque de Ciudad Rodrigo; by the Portuguese, he was made Marquis of Torres Vedras; and at home, raised to the Earldom of Wellington with an increased annuity of £2,000 a year. In the debate which took place in the Lower House when the grant for supporting his additional honours was proposed,

"Mr. Canning took occasion to state that a revenue of £5,000 a year had been granted to Lord Wellington by the Portuguese Government when they conferred upon him the title of Conde de Vimeiro; that as captain-general of Spain £5,000 a year had been offered him, and £7,000 as marshal in the Portuguese service; all which he had declined, saying, 'he would receive nothing from Spain and Portugal in their present state; he had only done his duty to his country, and to his country alone he would look for reward.'"

It was a matter of surprise to all who were not aware of the extensive espionage employed on both sides, how accurately Lord Wellington and the French marshals to whom he was opposed, were acquainted with the objects and the capabilities of each other. At Lisbon, many persons in immediate connection with the Regency were more than suspected of holding a correspondence with the French; and their treachery was encouraged by the culpable misconduct of the Portuguese Government in not punishing criminals whose treasons had been established beyond a question. The English newspapers were regularly transmitted from Paris by Napoleon; and they teemed with intelligence mischievously correct, and that too, from the head-quarters of the allied army; and—though a circumstance of rare occurrence—if an intimation of what he intended to attempt escaped from Lord Wellington's lips to the Spaniards with whom he was in communication, through the indiscretion of these individuals it was sure to reach the enemy. He says, writing to his brother,—"I apprised —— of my intention and plan for attacking Ciudad Rodrigo, and him alone, the success of which depends principally upon the length of time during which I can keep it concealed from the enemy. Some Spanish women at Portalegre were apprised of the plan by him, and it must reach the enemy!!! Yet —— is one of the best of them."

Through the correspondence intercepted by the guerillas, Lord Wellington constantly obtained the most valuable information. This was generally contained in letters from the French generals themselves, intended to direct the movements of their colleagues. Although their despatches were written in cypher, the allied leader generally contrived to find out the key which unveiled their contents; and his own secret espionage was even more extensive than the enemy's. "He had a number of spies amongst the Spaniards who were living within the French lines; a British officer in disguise constantly visited the French armies

in the field; a Spanish State counsellor, living at the head-quarters of the first corps, gave intelligence from that side; and a guitar-player of celebrity, named Fuentes, repeatedly making his way to Madrid, brought advice from thence. Mr. Stuart, under cover of vessels licensed to fetch corn for France, kept *chasse marées* constantly plying along the Biscay coast, by which he not only acquired direct information, but facilitated the transmission of intelligence from the land spies, amongst whom the most remarkable was a cobbler, living in a little hutch at the end of the bridge of Irun. This man, while plying his trade, continued for years, without being suspected, to count every French soldier that passed in or out of Spain by that passage, and transmitted their numbers by the *chasse marées* to Lisbon."

To Castanos, as captain-general of the province, and who had been personally present at the siege, Ciudad Rodrigo was formally delivered over,—Lord Wellington having rendered the place defensible again by filling in the trenches, repairing the breaches, and adding considerably to the strength of the out-works. Provisions were also allocated for the use of the garrison from his own magazines, and money supplied to defray the expenses of labour and materials; and on March 5th, Colonel Fletcher handed the fortress over to Calvert, the Spanish engineer.

Since the preceding December, Lord Wellington had been actively engaged in preparing the necessary means for the invest-ment of Badajoz. Elvas was the grand entrepôt—and there siege stores were collected, and gabions and fascines prepared. The pontoon bridge was also brought forward from Abrantes; and a battering train, which had been conveyed by sea and river carriage in the first place to Alcacer de Sal, was finally transported to the banks of the Guadiana.

Leaving a division on the Agueda to observe the frontier, Lord Wellington proceeded to Elvas by Villa Velha, where he fixed his head-quarters on March 11th. The pontoon bridge was thrown across the Guadiana on the 15th, and on the same day two flying bridges were established. On the 16th Marshal Beresford passed the river, and invested Badajoz with the 3rd, 4th, and light divisions, and a Portuguese brigade; General Graham, with the 5th, 6th, and 7th Divisions, and two brigades of cavalry, marched upon Llerena; while General Hill moved by Merida upon Almendralejoz. These covering armies were intended to prevent a junction between the corps of Soult

and Marmont, while the siege should be in progress—the former marshal being in front of Cadiz—the latter moving by Toledo in the direction of Valladolid.

When Lord Wellington sat down before Badajoz, its garrison consisted of five thousand effective men, under the command of a most distinguished engineer who had already defended the fortress with success. Since the former siege, Baron Phillipon had strengthened the place by mounting additional guns, retrenching the castle, and securing Fort San Christoval, which he connected by a covered way with the bridge by which the fort and city were united. "The Pardaleras too had been repaired and strengthened, and magazines established in the castle, into which, and into the citadel, it was the governor's intention to retire, if the place should be rendered no longer tenable. The enemy had also formed galleries and trenches at each salient of the counterscarp, in front of what they supposed would be the point of attack, that they might form mines under the breaching batteries, and afterwards sink shafts for other mines, whereby to destroy the works in proportion as the assailants should gain them, and thus leave only a heap of ruins if the place should be taken. No foresight, indeed, had been wanting on the governor's part. The peasantry having taken flight at the first siege and left their lands uncultivated, he had given directions for ploughing them with the oxen which were intended for slaughter, and they were sown by the soldiers within a circle of 3,000 yards: the kitchen gardens had also been distributed among the different corps and the officers of the staff, and in these they had a valuable resource."

Convoys had reached Badajoz on February 10th and 16th, and the garrison was amply provisioned. Part of the inhabitants, to avoid the horrors of a siege which they had already twice experienced, voluntarily quitted the place; and such of the remainder as had not a sufficiency of food to maintain their families for three months were forcibly expelled. In powder and shells Phillipon was inadequately provided; for two convoys, which had attempted to bring him a supply, had been threatened by Hill's corps and obliged to return to Seville.

Such was the condition of Badajoz when, limited both in time and means, Lord Wellington determined to attack it. Although his battering train was respectable, and by exertions under which an iron constitution had nearly yielded, a tolerable supply of stores and ammunition had been obtained, still he was

unprepared to undertake a formal siege. Mortars he had none —his miners were few and inexperienced—and if his operations were delayed, an advance of the French armies, or even the stormy weather he might prepare for at the equinox, must certainly interrupt the investment, and render his efforts to reduce Badajoz unavailing.

On the night of the 17th, Lord Wellington broke ground in front of Picurina, within 160 yards of the fort. The tempestuous state of the weather favoured the operation—the workmen were undiscovered by the enemy—and at daybreak, the approaches were 3 feet deep.

During the 18th, the work continued ; the relief improving the parallel, and the garrison, which had been strongly reinforced, keeping up a heavy fire of musketry on the labourers, assisted by frequent discharges from some field-pieces and a howitzer. The fire, however, produced but few casualties ; and during the night the parallels were prolonged, and two batteries traced out.

Throughout the 22nd, the rain fell heavily ; and at four in the afternoon a torrent came down filling the trenches to an overflow. The floods rose fearfully ; the pontoon bridge across the Guadiana was carried away ; eleven of the pontoons sank at their anchors, and the current became so rapid that the flying bridges could with difficulty work. It therefore became a question, if it would be possible to supply the army with provisions, and bring over the guns and ammunition for the attack; and serious apprehensions were entertained, that it would be necessary to withdraw from before the place.

But difficulties appeared only to rouse the determination, and demonstrate the resources, which Lord Wellington so eminently possessed. By immense exertions the bridge was restored—on the night of the 24th the breaching batteries were armed—and, at eleven o'clock on the morning of the 25th, the roar of artillery announced that the British guns had opened.

The events of the succeeding ten days form but the history of a siege, in which the bold and continued operations of the assailants were opposed by all that science could devise, or gallantry effect. Before the crushing fire of the breaching batteries, the solid masonry of the bastions of La Trinidada and Santa Maria gradually gave way ; and on the morning of April 5th, the engineers reported to Lord Wellington that both breaches were practicable.

The near approach of Marshal Soult, whose advanced guards

were already at Llerena, determined the allied general to assault Badajoz that evening. Accordingly, he made a close personal reconnaissance of the breaches ; but the commanding engineer having reported that the enemy had retrenched the greater breach, and adopted the most effectual means for an obstinate resistance, Lord Wellington decided on deferring the attack for another day, and during that interval, effect a third breach in the old curtain which connected the bastions against which his fire had hitherto been directed. Accordingly, on the morning of the 6th fourteen guns concentrated their fire on the escarp, which they saw to its very base ; and by four in the afternoon, the curtain was beaten down and the breach reported practicable.

The day passed, and every preparation for the assault was completed. The evening was dark and threatening,—twilight came,—the batteries ceased firing,—darkness fell—and the trenches, though crowded with armed men, remained unusually quiet. Lights were seen occasionally flitting back and forward through the fortress, and the "All's well" of the French sentinels was distinctly heard. While waiting in readiness for the assault, the deep gloom which hitherto had shrouded the beleaguered city, was suddenly dissipated by a flight of fireworks, which rose over the town, and displayed every object around it.

The word was given to advance, and the 4th and light divisions issued from the trenches. "At that moment the deep bell of the cathedral of St. John struck ten ; an unusual silence reigned around, and except the softened footsteps of the storming parties, as they fell upon the turf with military precision, not a movement was audible. A terrible suspense—a horrible stillness, —darkness,—a compression of the breathing,—the dull and ill-defined outline of the town,—the knowledge that similar and simultaneous movements were making on other points,—the certainty that two or three minutes would probably involve the forlorn hope in ruin, or make it a beacon-light to conquest,—all these made the heart throb quicker, and long for the bursting of the storm, when victory should crown daring with success, or hope and life should end together.

"On went the storming parties ; and one solitary musket was discharged beside the breach, but none answered it. The 3rd Division moved forward, closing rapidly up in columns at quarter distance. The ditch was gained,—the ladders were lowered,—on rushed the forlorn hope, with the storming party close behind them. The divisions were now on the brink of

the sheer descent, when a gun boomed from the parapet. The earth trembled,—a mine was fired,—an explosion,—and an infernal hissing from lighted fusees succeeded,—and, like the rising of a curtain on the stage, in the hellish glare that suddenly burst out around the breaches, the French lining the ramparts in crowds, and the British descending the ditch, were placed as distinctly visible to each other as if the hour were noontide!"

The explosion nearly annihilated the forlorn hope and the heads of the storming party. For a moment, astounded by the deafening noise, the supporting troops held back; but as if by a general impulse, some rushed down the ladders which had been lowered to the bottom of the ditch,—others leaped boldly in, reckless of the depth of the descent,—and while some mistook the face of an unfinished ravelin for the breach, which on gaining was found to be entirely separated from the ramparts, the rest struggled desperately up the breach, only to encounter at the summit a range of sword-blades, framed in beams too massive to be cut through, and secured by iron chains beyond the power of removal.

In this fearful situation, the courage of the assailants assumed a desperation that appears almost incredible; officers and men in fast succession gained the summit, only to be shot down; and many perished in vain attempts to force an impassable barrier of bristling sword-blades. "The garrison never appeared intimidated nor to lose their decision and coolness for a moment on any point, for whilst some were repelling the assailants with their bayonets from the summits of the breaches, others continued to roll down with the greatest precision and effect shells and fire-barrels on the men in the ditch below, and their tirailleurs unceasingly fired with accuracy and steadiness from cuts in the parapets between the points of contention.

"Similar gallant efforts to those above described were frequently repeated to carry the breaches, but the combustibles prepared by the garrison seemed inexhaustible. Each time the assailants were opposed by appalling and destructive explosions, and each time were driven down with a great loss of officers and of the bravest soldiers.

"After several efforts the remaining men, discouraged by such constant repulses, could not be prevailed upon to make a further effort. Their situation in the ditch of a front, with an incessant fire upon them from the parapets, was most trying; still not an individual attempted to withdraw—they remained patiently to

be slaughtered, though far too discouraged to make a fresh attempt to extricate themselves by forcing the breaches."

But at other points bravery obtained success, and Badajoz was already carried. The 3rd Division crossed the Rivillas, surmounted the castle hill and, under a tremendous fire, planted their ladders. The boldest led the way,—and unappalled by a shower of shells and missiles, they gained the parapet. But there the French received them with the bayonet—while utterly incapable of resistance, they were hurled from the top, and crushed by huge stones and beams which, showered from the walls, destroyed any who survived the fall. Receding a few paces, the assailants formed again—two officers caught up the ladders, and the boldest men sprang after. Both reached the parapet unharmed,—the assailants swarmed up,—a firm footing was gained,—and the bayonet did the rest. Too late, a reinforcement detached by Phillipon reached the gate, and a sharp fusillade ensued, in which Colonel Ridge was most unfortunately slain. But the French retired in despair, and the castle remained in the possession of the "fighting 3rd."

Badajoz, on that fearful night, was encircled by men, desperately resolute to force their way through the iron defences that opposed them. A heavy fire had been opened on the Pardaleras,—the bridge was assailed by the Portuguese,—and the more distant bastion of San Vicente was at the same time escaladed by Walker's brigade. After a desperate resistance, the French were driven along the ramparts, each bastion resolutely defended and each as bravely stormed.

In carrying the last, General Walker was severely wounded. A lighted port-fire having alarmed a soldier, he called out loudly that a mine was sprung, and a singular panic arose among troops who but a few minutes before had braved death so recklessly. The whole gave ground, while General Veilland coming up with a French reinforcement, drove the affrighted soldiers along the rampart, and recovered possession of the works to the very bastion of San Vicente. But there, a weak battalion of the 38th had been held in reserve. Retaining their fire until the enemy closed, a shattering volley was delivered, and the regiment cheered and charged. Instantly the routed soldiers rallied—all advanced with renewed confidence—and the French, abandoning the defences, fled into the town, followed by a part of the assailants.

Lord Wellington, previous to the assault, had stationed himself on the left of the Calemon, as the best point from which he

could issue future orders for the conduct of the attack. Although the carcasses thrown from the town, by betraying the 3rd Division to the garrison, had precipitated the attack, with the exception of the 5th Division, whose ladders were delayed, all went forward correctly. The town clock announced the marching of the storming parties, and the roar of the artillery told that the conflict had begun. From a height beside the quarries, where Lord Wellington and his staff were standing, he saw the outline of the works, and "for a minute, the fireworks thrown from the place, showed the columns at the breaches. Darkness followed—stillness more horrible yet—and then the sudden burst of light, as shells and mines exploded. The main breach was literally in a blaze—sheets of fire mounted to the sky, accompanied by a continued roaring of hellish noises, as every villainous combustible was ignited to discover or destroy the assailants.

"The wounded came fast to the rear, but they could tell little how matters were progressing. At last, a mounted officer rode up. He was the bearer of evil tidings—the attack upon the breaches had failed—the majority of the officers had fallen—the men, left without leaders to direct them, were straggling about the ditch, and unless instant assistance was sent, the assault must fail entirely. Pale, but thoroughly undisturbed, the British general heard the disastrous communication, and issued orders to send forward a fresh brigade (Hay's) to the breaches. Half an hour passed, and another officer appeared. He came from Picton to say the castle had been carried by escalade, and that the 3rd Division were safe within the town."

Lord Wellington instantly transmitted orders to hold the castle till the morning, and then blowing down the gates, to sally if necessary, and support a fresh assault. No further attempt to gain the breaches was required—and an officer was despatched to withdraw the columns, which was effected about midnight.

Resistance had ceased on the part of the garrison. Some irregular fighting occurred in the streets, but the intelligence of the capture of the castle at once occasioned an abandonment of the breaches—and Phillipon and Veilland, with part of the garrison, retired to San Christoval, where they surrendered on the first summons in the morning. At daybreak the remnant of the 4th and light divisions entered the breaches unopposed; and Badajoz, after a well-conducted defence, and a last and desperate effort to repulse an assault, fell to no ordinary conqueror.

Badajoz, in point of fact, was doubly won, for the successes of either the 3rd or 5th Divisions would have rendered its fall inevitable. It is a singular circumstance, perhaps without a parallel in the events of sieges, that an army with a powerful artillery, after twenty days' open trenches, and having formed three good practicable breaches in the body of a place, should at the moment of giving the assault employ two divisions on other points to escalade the defences where entire, and that each of the escalades should be crowned with complete success, whilst the efforts against the breaches were attended with utter discomfiture. Such an arrangement shows no very great confidence to have been placed in the main operation ; and to the correct judgment formed on that head by Lord Wellington, with his firmness and resource, in seconding the assault by such unusual efforts, the army is indebted for its success against Badajoz.

On the day of the investment the garrison consisted, by French returns, of 4,742 men. About 1,200 were rendered *hors de combat* during the siege, and 3,500 were made prisoners. The five French battalions in Badajoz had no eagles ; but the colours of the garrison, with those of the regiment of Hesse Darmstadt, were taken and transmitted by Lord Wellington to the Prince Regent.

The loss of the victors was most severe, for in the siege and storm nearly 5,000 men were killed and wounded. Lieutenant-Colonel M'Cleod of the 43rd, and Major O'Hare of the 95th, died sword in hand in the breaches ; and five generals, namely, Picton, Colville, Kempt, Walker, and Bowes, were wounded.

In reviewing this celebrated siege and assault, one feels at a loss whether to admire more that lofty flight of genius, which by greatly daring, and setting at nought all military maxims, effected what ordinary men would not attempt ; or the matchless valour of British soldiers, which death, presented in every horrible variety, never could extinguish. That the attempt upon the breaches should not succeed one fact will easily explain. When the columns arrived before them in the morning, no enemy to oppose, and with daylight to direct their entrance, time was required to remove the numerous obstacles which presented themselves, before a descent into the town was possible. Veiled in impenetrable darkness, and desperately defended, who could surmount those formidable barriers and live ? And the wonder is, not that the troops should fail in forcing a passage, but that when hope was over, they should firmly

remain to be slaughtered by an enemy on whom they could not retaliate, and persevere to the last, until a formal order was delivered to recall them from that fatal breach. To account for the capture of the castle and San Vicente is difficult indeed. "In ordinary military reasoning such places would be considered secure from assault ; but the efforts of the British troops occasionally set all calculation at defiance ; and when a few years shall have swept away eye-witnesses of their achievements on this night, they will not be credited."

It was a glorious triumph for the conqueror, and no doubt he felt it such. But glory may be bought too dear, and the most brilliant success is seldom unalloyed, for victory cannot be obtained without a sacrifice. "When the extent of the night's havoc was made known to Lord Wellington, the firmness of his nature gave way for a moment, and the pride of conquest yielded to a passionate burst of grief for the loss of his gallant soldiers."

CHAPTER XVI

THE reduction of Rodrigo and Badajoz had opened an extended field for the future operations of the allied leader. A prompt march into Andalusia might have been considered as the first consequence of his recent success, and the fall of Seville would have formed a glorious pendant to the capture of the frontier fortresses. The army was burning for fresh service, and its condition, like its spirit, was admirable—every arm was perfect—the cavalry well mounted, and the artillery superb. Prudence, however, forbade Lord Wellington from undertaking what he might have so confidently expected to effect. Rodrigo was unprovisioned, its garrison mutinous, and the defences of Badajoz unrepaired. If he followed Soult towards Seville, and withdrew his divisions from the Guadiana, Marmont might fall suddenly on Rodrigo—an effort to which he would be fully equal, as a fresh train of siege artillery was on its way from France, to replace the battering guns taken in Badajoz. Lord Wellington therefore determined to secure the conquests he had already made ; but at the same time, and by a different line of operations, achieve every advantage which he might probably have obtained by advancing to Seville.

To employ without delay the finest army he had yet commanded was Lord Wellington's determination ; and the time

seemed fitting. Alarmed by the threatening attitude which Russia had assumed, Napoleon's attention had been directed from the Peninsula to the North ; and at the moment when the tide of victory in Spain had turned,—when his armies had been defeated, and his strongholds lost,—he felt himself necessitated to weaken his lieutenants, by drafting the *élite* of their corps, to complete that magnificent host with which he tempted fortune too far, and madly wrought his ruin. Joseph, weary of the painful part he had enacted, was anxious to lay down a sceptre which had nothing of royalty but its tinsel, and seek in retirement that happiness which, with an uneasy crown, he had found so unattainable. Recent events had shown that the possession of the Spanish capital depended no longer on the imperious pleasure of the Emperor. The past campaign had taught a serious lesson ; and the question was not how soon a French army should find its way to Lisbon, but how long Madrid was to be secure from the aggressions of a British one.

This change of circumstances abroad was encouraging ; but at home, there was much to embarrass, and more to apprehend. Mr. Perceval, then at the head of the administration, was a zealous and upright Minister ; but with every wish to support a contest on the Peninsula, he trembled at the responsibility which its enormous expenditure must entail upon a Cabinet that advocated its continuance. The Whig party were hankering after office ; Cobbett and the demagogues of the day clamoured incessantly ; and, with truth suppressed, and falsehood unblushingly resorted to, the country was fevered by misstatements ; and when success could not be denied, it was dashed by the gloomiest assurances that ulterior discomfiture was inevitable. No wonder, then, that "the people, deceived by both parties as to the nature of the war, and wondering how the French could keep the field at all, were, in common with the Ministers, still doubtful if their commander was a truly great man, or an impostor."

On the death of Mr. Perceval, Lord Liverpool succeeded as Prime Minister ; and it was reserved for him to witness that cloud of promise which had arisen no larger than a man's hand, gradually overspread the political horizon, until the evils attendant on a military despotism had yielded to the stronger influence of moral government, based upon religion, and fraught with civil liberty.

At this political juncture Lord Wellington took the field again, and early in June, all was prepared for active operations.

The weather was fine, and as the route lay principally through forest lands nothing could be more picturesque and beautiful than the country which the line of march presented. The wooded landscape displayed its verdure under the sunny influence of a cloudless sky, and singularly contrasted its summer green with the snow-topped pinnacles of the Sierra de Gata. No enemy appeared—for days the march was leisurely continued—until, on clearing the forest at Valmasa, the German hussars in advance had a skirmish with a French picket.

With evening the skirmish closed; the enemy retiring across the Tormes, and the allies bivouacking on its banks, overlooked by a city already venerable from its antiquity, famed as a seat of learning, and which was destined shortly to obtain a different and a more enduring celebrity.

Salamanca stands in a commanding situation on the right bank of the Tormes, a river of considerable magnitude there, which rises near the Sierra de Tablada in Old Castile, and falls into the Douro on the Portuguese frontier, opposite Bemposta.

On the morning of the 17th, the allies crossed the Tormes by the fords of Santa Martha and Los Cantos; and Lord Wellington entered Salamanca at the head of his victorious troops. "Nothing could be more animating than the scene. The day was brilliant, presenting all the glowing luxuriance of a southern climate. Upwards of fifty staff officers accompanied the British general; they were immediately followed by the 14th Dragoons and a brigade of artillery; the streets were crowded to excess; signals of enthusiasm and friendship waved from the balconies; the entrance to the Plaza was similar to a triumph; every window and balcony was filled with persons welcoming the distinguished officer to whom they looked up for liberation and permanent relief. Lord Wellington dismounted, and was immediately surrounded by the municipality, and the higher orders of the inhabitants, all eager to pay him respect and homage. At the same moment, the 6th Division of British infantry entered the south-west angle of the square. It was impossible to describe the electric effect produced under these circumstances by the music; as the bands of the regiments burst in full tones on the ear of the people, a shout of enthusiastic feeling escaped from the crowd, all ranks seeming perfectly inebriated with exultation.

"From this scene, so calculated to distract the attention of ordinary men, Lord Wellington retired to make immediate arrangements for reducing the forts. A plan of them having been produced and placed in his hands by the Spaniards, he left the adulating crowd, escaping from the almost overwhelming demonstrations of friendship and respect with which he was greeted; and before the town had recovered from its confusion and its joy, or the 'vivas' had ceased to resound, his system of attack was decided upon, and the necessary orders for its execution issued to the troops."

Marmont, on the preceding night, had evacuated the city, and with a cavalry corps and two divisions of infantry retreated leisurely to Fuente el Sauco, followed by the allied advanced guard; while, with the exception of Clinton's division, which remained in Salamanca to invest the forts, the whole of the army of Lord Wellington took a position on the Sierra of San Christoval.

"On the opposite bank of a rivulet tributary to the Tormes, the convents of Los Cayetanos and La Merced had been converted with great skill into two redoubts, with well-covered perpendicular escarps, deep ditches, and casemated counterscarps; they were also full of bomb proofs, made by supporting a roof horizontally and vertically with strong beams, and covering it with six feet of earth. These works were seen at once to be far more respectable than Lord Wellington had expected to find, his information amounting to little more than that some convents had been fortified. It was necessary to reduce them before the army could advance, but the means of attack had been provided on this inadequate knowledge: they consisted of only four iron eighteen-pounders and four twenty-four-pounder iron howitzers, with a hundred rounds for each. The engineers had only four hundred intrenching-tools, without any stores; there were present three engineer officers, with nine men of the corps of royal military artificers; and the works were soon found to be even more formidable than they appeared."

To the 6th Division the details of the siege were committed. Ground was broken before San Vicente on the night of the 17th; on the 19th a battery commenced breaching, and with two field pieces placed on the roof of San Bernardo, which overlooked the fort, seven guns were turned on the devoted convent.

On the night of the 23rd, the fire of the British guns

established on the right bank of the Tormes had made no decisive impression; but as time was invaluable, and Lord Wellington seemed determined to let nothing induce him to move forward until the forts had fallen, an attempt was made to carry Los Cayetanos and La Merced by escalade. The attack failed, and the loss sustained was considerable. A very valuable officer perished on the occasion: General Bowes, already wounded, was under the surgeon's hands when it was reported that the troops were giving way;—he instantly hastened to the post of danger, and died sword in hand in the *mêlée*.

In the meantime Marmont, having collected four divisions and a brigade of cavalry at El Sauco, advanced to relieve his isolated garrisons. Having received reinforcements, the French marshal moved by his left on the 22nd, and seized a height which overlooked the right of the allies. To secure a view of the British position, however, was the only advantage he obtained; for on the approach of the 7th Division, under Sir Thomas Graham, he retired from the heights, and took a new position two leagues in the rear,—his centre being at Aldea Rubia, and his flanks resting on Cabeza Vellosa and Huerta. By this new disposition, Marmont would have had the power of crossing the river, and opening a communication by the left bank with his imprisoned garrisons; but his able antagonist as promptly effected a movement of his troops, and thus obtaining a command of both banks of the Tormes, covered Salamanca completely.

It was Marmont's determination to offer battle on the 28th; but Lord Wellington, having obtained the siege stores he required from Almeida, pressed the forts so vigorously, that they yielded on the 27th.

The fall of the forts was communicated to Marmont on the evening of the 27th; and he received intelligence at the same time that Caffarelli's expected reinforcement was delayed. The object for which he had advanced had failed—and it would have been impolitic to abide a battle now—accordingly he retreated during the night by the roads of Torro and Tordesillas, taking with him the garrison he had placed in the castle of Alba de Tormes.

The reduction of the forts of Salamanca occasioned a considerable loss, for 540 men had been rendered *hors de combat*, from the passage of the Tormes to the fall of San Vicente. "When it was ascertained that Marshal Marmont had retired, a Te Deum was performed in the cathedral, at which Lord

Wellington, accompanied by a numerous body of the officers of his army, attended. The scene was grand and impressive, the spacious noble building crowded to excess, and the ceremony performed with all the pomp and splendour of Catholic worship. The pealing organ never poured its tones over a more brilliant, varied, or chivalrous audience. To describe the variety of groups would be endless: the eye, wandering through the expanse of the building, could seldom rest twice on objects of similarity.

"All the pomp of a great episcopal seat was displayed on the occasion. Contrasted with the sombre dresses of the numerous unofficiating clergy, the scarlet uniforms of the British were held in relief by the dark Spanish or Portuguese costume. The Spanish peasant, in all the simplicity and cleanliness of his dress, appeared by the mustached and fierce-looking guerilla; while the numerous mantillas and waving fans of the Spanish ladies attracted attention to the dark voluptuous beauties of Castile. It was an enthusiastic and imposing scene; nor was its least impressive effect produced by the quiet, unassuming presence of the great man who, in the career of his glory, knew that by showing respect to the religious institutions of other countries, he best secured for himself those feelings which are only to be substantially acquired by deference to the customs of a people having an equal right with ourselves to adopt the persuasion or the forms most congenial to their minds, and most consistent with their conscientious views."

The adulation of "a giddy crowd" had no charms for one whose mind was centred upon objects from which the evanescent displays of popular approbation could never for a moment distract it. Ordering that the city forts should be razed, and the castle of Alba dismantled, Lord Wellington quitted Salamanca on the evening of the 28th, and on the 29th rejoined the army.

While all in Salamanca evinced that joyous excitement which victory elicits, Lord Wellington was preparing for a greater triumph; and the allied army was already on its march, and reached the Guareña on June 30th. On July 1st it encamped on the Trabancos, and on the 2nd crossed the Zapardial, driving the French rear-guard in great confusion over the Tordesillas. The period that intervened from the 3rd to the 15th, was marked by a few changes of position; but no serious affair took place until the junction of Bonet's division from the Asturias, with a strong cavalry reinforcement, encouraged Marmont to extend by his right along the banks of the

Douro, and occasioning the allies to make a correspondent movement, head-quarters were changed from Rueda to Nava del Rey. On the 16th, the French marshal passed two divisions across the bridge at Toro, and the allied general occupied Fuente la Peña and Canizal, the 4th and light divisions taking a position at Castrejon.

At no period of the campaign was the excitement in both armies raised to a greater pitch. The allies were flushed with victory, and confident of fresh success—the enemy, receiving daily an accession to their strength, and burning to wipe away the disgrace attendant upon their recent discomfitures. Marmont courted an action upon ground on which, from its being favourable for defence, he knew that his adversary must attack him at disadvantage—while Wellington, as ardent for a battle, but with a resolution not to be disturbed, refused to throw away a chance, and coolly waited until he could deal a blow that should be decisively effective. No time could be fraught with more military interest than that when the rival armies were in each other's presence on the Douro. "The weather was very fine, the country rich, and the troops received their rations regularly; wine was so plentiful that it was hard to keep the soldiers sober; the caves of Rueda, either natural or cut in the rock below the surface of the earth, were so immense and so well stocked, that the drunkards of two armies failed to make any very sensible diminution in the quantity. Many men of both sides perished in that labyrinth, and on both sides also, the soldiers, passing the Douro in groups, held amicable intercourse, conversing of the battles that were yet to be fought; the camps on the banks of the Douro seemed at times to belong to one army, so difficult is it to make brave men hate each other."

This state of inaction was hurrying to its close. Marmont had determined to resume the offensive; and having masked his design by deceptive movements for some days, he commenced a series of operations, well conceived and ably executed, but which the superior genius of his opponent rendered nugatory in their results. After alluding to the movement of the French troops by their right, in his despatch to Lord Bathurst, the allied general thus details the succeeding operations:

"It was totally out of my power to prevent the enemy from passing the Douro at any point at which he might think it expedient, as he had in his possession all the bridges over that river, and many of the fords; but he recrossed that river at

Toro in the night of the 16th, moved his whole army to Tordesillas, where he again crossed the Douro on the morning of the 17th, and assembled his army on that day at La Nava del Rey; having marched not less than ten leagues in the course of the 17th.

"The 4th and light divisions of infantry, and Major-General Anson's brigades of cavalry, had marched to Castrejon on the night of the 16th, with a view to the assembly of the army on the Guareña, and were at Castrejon under the orders of Lieutenant-General Sir Stapleton Cotton on the 17th, not having been ordered to proceed farther, in consequence of my knowledge that the enemy had not passed the Douro at Toro, and there was not time to call them in between the hour at which I received the intelligence of the whole of the enemy's army being at La Nava and daylight of the morning of the 18th. I therefore took measures to provide for their retreat and junction, by moving the 5th Division to Torrecilla de la Orden; and Major-General Le Marchant's, Major-General Alten's, and Major-General Bock's brigades of cavalry to Alaejos.

"The enemy attacked the troops at Castrejon at the dawn of day of the 18th, and Sir Stapleton Cotton maintained the post without suffering any loss till the cavalry had joined him. Nearly about the same time the enemy turned, by Alaejos, the left flank of our position at Castrejon.

"The troops retired in admirable order to Torrecilla de la Orden, having the enemy's whole army on their flank, or in their rear, and thence to the Guareña, which river they passed under the same circumstances, and effected their junction with the army."

The 19th and 20th were passed in marching and manœuvring. Each hour wore away in the belief that the succeeding one would usher in a conflict; and when evening came, and the rival armies bivouacked in the other's presence, the weary soldier as he stretched himself upon his grassy bed, expected that to-morrow's sun would rise upon a battle-field. In the reminiscences of a life, while years shall slip away unregarded, those days of glorious excitement will come back with vivid freshness to the memory of him who fought at Salamanca.

What could be more beautiful than the military spectacle which the movement of ninety thousand men, in parallel lines, presented? The line of march was seldom without the range of

cannon, and often within that of musketry. When the ground allowed it, the guns on each side occasionally opened. But the cannonade was but partially maintained. To reach a point was Marmont's object—to intercept him was that of Wellington. "The French general moving his army as one man along the crest of the heights, preserved the lead he had taken, and made no mistake;" and the extraordinary rapidity of his marching bore evidence to the truth of Napoleon's observation, that, "for his greatest successes he was as much indebted to the legs as he was to the arms of his soldiers."

The morning of the 21st found the allied army on its old position of San Christoval. Marmont having garrisoned the castle of Alba, crossed the Tormes, marched up the valley of Machechuco, and bivouacked in the forest of Calvaraso de Ariba. In the afternoon, Wellington passed the bulk of his army also across the river, leaving the 3rd Division, and a brigade of Portuguese cavalry entrenched upon the right bank of the Tormes.

The morning broke sullenly; and with the first dawn, the light troops of the enemy commenced skirmishing; while frequent movements of heavy columns, as they marched and countermarched, seemed rather calculated to confuse an opponent than effect a particular object. On one of two heights, named Arapiles, the allied right was appuied, and the occupation of the other was attempted; but the French, with a similar design, had already detached troops, who succeeded in obtaining its possession. The day wore on,—the recent tempest apparently had cleared the atmosphere,—all was bright and unclouded sunshine,—and over a wide expanse of undulating landscape nothing obscured the range of sight but dust from the arid roads, or wreathing smoke occasioned by the spattering fire of the light troops. "Marmont was busily manœuvring, and Lord Wellington coolly noticing from a height the dispositions of his opponent which as he properly calculated would lead to a general engagement."

At noon, from the rear of the Arapiles, Marmont made a demonstration, as if his design was to attack the allied left. The movement brought Lord Wellington to the ground; but readily perceiving that it was but a feint of the French marshal, he returned to his former position on the right.

At two o'clock, finding that his abler antagonist was not to be deceived, Marmont determined to outflank the right of the allies, and interpose between them and the Rodrigo road; and

in consequence, commenced marching his columns by their left. This was a fatal movement—and as the French infantry extended, a staff officer announced it to Lord Wellington. One eagle glance satisfied him that the moment for attack was come—a few brief orders passed his lips—and the doom of his rival's army was pronounced.

No conflict had been so long desired, and none more unexpectedly brought on. The baggage of the allied army was moving towards the Rodrigo road; the commissariat had already retired; evening was coming fast; and still no note of preparation indicated that the storm of battle was about to burst. Marmont, fearing that his cautious opponent would avoid a contest by retreating, hurried his own dispositions to force a battle, and Thomiere's division, with his light cavalry and fifty guns, was put in rapid march. The centre columns were debouching from the forest, and Lord Wellington's corresponding movement was to be Marmont's signal to fall on. Suddenly the inactive masses which hitherto had been resting on the English heights, assumed a threatening attitude. Was it a feint? A few minutes removed that doubt—the allied brigades closed up rapidly on each other—and the 3rd Division, in four columns, rushed down the hill, and he who would have been the assailant was assailed!

Unchecked by a furious cannonade, Pakenham crossed the hollow between the high grounds occupied previously by the opposing forces; scattered the light troops who would have stayed his progress; and pressing up the hill, without pausing to deploy, the regiments brought their right shoulders forward in a run, and, without halting, formed line from open column. No troops were ever more nobly led; and none advanced under showers of grape, and a heavy *tiraillade*, with more imposing steadiness. The crest was gained. The French line commenced firing, beat the *pas de charge*, and moved forward a few paces; but, undauntedly, Wallace's brigade closed up ranks necessarily disordered by a rapid advance over irregular ground, and all pushed boldly on.

The French, alarmed by this movement, became unsteady. The daring advance of an enemy, whom the concentrated fire of five thousand muskets could not arrest, was indeed astounding. All that brave men could do was done by their officers—as they strove to confirm the courage of their troops, and persuade them to withstand an assault that threatened their wavering ranks. "The colonel of the 22nd *legére*, seizing a musket from a

grenadier, rushed forward, and mortally wounded Major Murphy of the 88th. Speedily his death was avenged—a soldier shot the Frenchman through the head, who, tossing his arms wildly up, fell forward and expired. The brigade betrayed impatience ; and the 88th, excited to madness by the fall of a favourite officer—who passed dead along their front, as his charger galloped off with his rider's foot sticking in the stirrup—could scarcely be kept back. Pakenham marked the feeling, and ordered Wallace 'to let them loose.' The word was given—down came the bayonets to the charge—the pace quickened—a wild cheer, mingled with the Irish hurra, rent the skies—and unwilling to stand the shock, the French gave ground. The Rangers, and the supporting regiments, broke the dense mass of infantry, bayoneting all whom they could overtake—until, 'run to a standstill,' they halted to recover breath, and stayed the slaughter."

Marmont, perceiving the error he had committed, endeavoured to redeem it by issuing orders to halt the marching by his left, and hurry on the movement of his centre columns, and thus re-connect his severed line. But at this moment, a howitzer shell shattered his arm, lacerated his side, and obliged him to be carried from the field. Bonet, who succeeded to the command, was also badly wounded ; and the task of restoring the fortunes of the day devolved upon Clausel. Thomiere had fallen at the head of his division ; Foy and Ferrey were among the wounded ; and thus, the confusion incident to a sudden attack was increased, when the example and exertions of superior officers were most required to arrest the growing disorder, which otherwise threatened to end, as it did, in a general *déroute*.

Although driven from the first height, the French formed on their reserves upon a wooded hill, offering a double front, the one opposed to Pakenham's division, the other to that of Leith, which, with the Portuguese brigade under Bradford, and a strong cavalry and artillery support, were now coming rapidly into action. The advance of these noble troops, as they crossed the valley under a furious cannonade, was beautiful. A storm of grape fell heavily upon their ranks, but "the men marched with the same orderly steadiness as at first ; no advance in line at a review was ever more correctly executed ; the dressing was admirable, and spaces were no sooner formed by casualties, than closed up with the most perfect regularity, and without the slightest deviation from the order of march."

On cresting the height, the enemy were seen in squares, with

their front ranks kneeling. They appeared steady and determined ; and until the drum rolled, not a shot was heard. Presently the signal was given—a sheet of fire burst from the faces of the squares—and a rolling volley as promptly answered it. This double fire hid the combatants from each other's view ; but the English cheer rose wildly as the rattle of the fusillade died away ; and next moment a steady array of glittering bayonets cleared the smoke, and the French square was shattered by the charge.

At this crisis, their flank fiercely assailed by Pakenham, and their front broken by Leith, the smoke was succeeded by clouds of dust, and the trample of approaching cavalry was heard. It was Le Marchant's. The rush of horses' feet rose above the din of battle ; and that sound, so ominous to broken infantry, announced the final ruin of the French left wing.

Bursting through smoke and dust, the heavy brigade galloped across the interval of ground, between the heights where the 3rd Division had made its flank attack, and the fifth its more direct one. Sweeping through a mob of routed soldiers, the brigade rode boldly at the three battalions of the French 66th, which, formed in supporting lines, endeavoured to check the advance of the allies, and afford time for the broken divisions to have their organisation restored. Heedless of its searching fire, the British dragoons penetrated and broke the columns ; and numbers of the French were sabred, while the remainder were driven back upon the 3rd Division and made prisoners. Still pressing on, another regiment, in close order, presented itself ; this too, was charged, broken, and cut down.

Although this brilliant attack had disordered the formation of the brigade, still the heavy cavalry rode gallantly at new opponents, and under a fire from which horsemen less resolute would have recoiled, they broke a third and stronger column, and seized and secured five pieces of artillery. Nothing could arrest their headlong career. Their noble commander, Le Marchant, had already fallen, fighting at their head ; but leaders were not wanting ; Cotton and Somerset were foremost in the front of battle ; wounds were unheeded ; and men attached to other arms of the service, carried away by a chivalrous enthusiasm, were seen charging with the heavy dragoons, and engaged in the thickest of the *mêlée*.

With the ruin of the French left wing, the struggle might have been expected to have terminated and victory certain ; but while the right of the allies, by its impetuous charges, had swept

away all that opposed its advance, the battle was raging in the centre, and the fortune of the day for a brief time wavered. Against the Arapiles, which had been occupied by a French battalion and a battery of guns, Pack's Portuguese brigade was detached ; while the 4th Division, under General Cole, simultaneously attacked Bonet's corps, with a vigour which promised a successful result. But Pack's assault failed totally. The Portuguese regiments recoiled ; and after the gallant exertions of their officers had been used in vain, the attack was abandoned and the height left in possession of the enemy.

Nothing could be more unfortunate than this repulse. Unassailed themselves, the French turned their musketry and guns upon the flank and rear of the 4th Division, now completely exposed to their fire ; while Bonet, remarking the failure of Pack's attack, rallied his retreating battalions, and in turn, becoming the assailant, drove back the British regiments. From the Arapiles a murderous fire was maintained ; showers of grape fell thickly on the retiring division ; men and officers dropped fast ; and although Marshal Beresford, with a Portuguese brigade, came promptly to the assistance of the hard-pressed 4th, the French gathered both strength and courage—for numbers of their companions derouted on the left, joined their companions in the centre, while Boyer's heavy cavalry moved forward to support an advance which promised to end in victory. At this dangerous crisis the confusion was increased by the loss of the commanding officers ; for both Cole and Beresford were wounded, and carried from the field.

"Lord Wellington marked the emergency, and ordered Clinton's divison to advance. This fine and unbroken corps, numbering 6,000 bayonets, pushed rapidly forward, confronted the victorious enemy, who, with loud cheers, were gaining ground on every point, as the hard-pressed 4th Division was driven back by overwhelming numbers. Bonet, determined to follow up his temporary success, met Clinton's division manfully. For a time neither would give ground—a close and furious conflict resulted—while the ceaseless roll of musketry, and the thunder of fifty guns, told how furiously the battle-ground was disputed. Both fought desperately,—and though night was closing, the withered grass blazing on the surface of the hill, threw an unearthly glare upon the combatants, and displayed the alternations that attended the 'heady fight.' But the British bayonet, at last, opened the path to victory. Such a desperate encounter could not endure. The French

began to waver,—the 6th Division cheered, pushed forward, gained ground,—while, no longer able to withstand an enemy who seemed determined to sweep everything from before it, the French retired in confusion, leaving the hard-contested field in undisputed possession of the island conquerors.

The daring efforts of the French centre to restore the battle but tended to increase the severity of the defeat. Like Thomiere's, Bonet's division was entirely broken and dispersed ; and had not darkness enabled the remnants of these corps to shelter in the woods, or gain the fords at Alba, the whole must have been cut down or made prisoners.

When the battle was lost irretrievably, Clausel's dispositions to cover what threatened to prove a ruinous retreat, were in fine keeping with his previous efforts to restore a disastrous day. With the divisions of Foy and Maucune, after the latter had abandoned the Arapiles, he rallied on a rising ground, covering the roads leading to the fords at Encinas and Huerta, and thus secured the route to Alba de Tormes. To dislodge him, the light division, part of the 4th, and the guards were advanced, supported by the 7th, and a Spanish reserve. The enemy fell back under a heavy fire of light troops who disputed every height, while their retiring batteries occasionally maintained a heavy cannonade. Never pausing to reply to the fusillade of the French skirmishers, the British columns pushed steadily on, severed Foy's corps from Maucune's, and rendered the escape of the former all but desperate. But the devoted bravery of Maucune saved his colleague from destruction. His own situation was most perilous. His flank was turned ; for the 3rd Division was moving round his left, while his assailants, with increasing numbers, were pressing him hard in front ; and although the fire of the French artillery was rapid and well directed, it could not arrest the British advance, and the 6th Division, with a brigade of the 4th, mounted the hill with fearless intrepidity. Darkness had fallen, but in a stream of fire the movements of the combatants could be traced. "On the side of the British a sheet of flame was seen, sometimes advancing with an even front, sometimes pricking forth in spear heads, now falling back in waving lines, and anon darting upwards in one vast pyramid, the apex of which often approached yet never gained the actual summit of the mountain ; but the French musketry, rapid as lightning, sparkled along the brow of the height with unvarying fulness, and with what destructive effects the dark gaps and changing shapes of the adverse fire

showed too plainly. Yet when Pakenham had again turned the enemy's left, and Foy's division had glided into the forest, Maucune's task was completed, the effulgent crest of the ridge became black and silent, and the whole French army vanished as it were in the darkness."

In the belief that Alba de Tormes was secured by a Spanish garrison, Lord Wellington directed his pursuit towards the fords of Huerta and Encinas. There, he naturally calculated that he should find the broken masses of the enemy ; and with fresh troops, the capture or destruction of the whole must have followed. In person he urged on the march of the troops ; and so close was he on the heels of the enemy, that a spent bullet perforated his holster, and slightly contused his thigh.

Profiting as well by the darkness, as by the terrible mistake of Carlos d'Espana, in leaving the Castle of Alba undefended, Clausel, passing the Tormes by the bridge and fords, retreated hastily on Peneranda. At daybreak the allied pursuit recommenced ; and in a few hours the advanced cavalry of the left wing, the German dragoons, and Anson's light brigade, came up with the French rearguard. Assailed vigorously by some squadrons of the 11th and 16th Dragoons, the French horsemen broke and abandoned three infantry battalions, who hastily endeavoured to reach the crest of a height named La Serna. Two regiments succeeded in the attempt, and formed square ; but the third, assaulted when in column, was completely overthrown. Following up their success, Bock's heavy dragoons, under a destructive musketry, formed, charged, and totally dispersed the remaining squares ; and while many fugitives were cut down, more than five hundred of the broken battalions were overtaken and made prisoners.

After the destruction of the rearguard at La Serna, the French divisions continued their flight with a rapidity that speedily removed them beyond Lord Wellington's pursuit. At Nava de Sotroval, the cavalry and horse artillery under General Chauvel, joined the beaten army—and thus covered by fresh horsemen, Clausel reached Floris de Avila by a single march—crossed the Zapardiel next morning, and retreated by Arevala on Valladolid. The allies, worn down with fatigue, halted on the 25th ; but the light cavalry and guerilla horse hung upon the French rear, securing many prisoners—while more, less fortunate, fell into the hands of the peasantry, from whom little mercy was either to be expected or obtained. On the 30th, Lord Wellington entered Valladolid, Clausel falling back on Burgos ; but intending

to strike a blow against King Joseph and the army of the centre, the allied general recrossed the Douro on the following day, and established his head-quarters at Cuellar. Having obtained supplies from the rear, Lord Wellington, leaving Clinton's division to observe the line of the Douro, with Anson's cavalry at Villavarrez, resumed his operations on August 6th, marching on the capital by the route of Segovia.

Salamanca, whether considered in its military or moral results, was probably the most important of all the Peninsular triumphs. It was a decisive victory—and yet its direct advantages fell infinitely short of what Lord Wellington might have been warranted in expecting. How much more fatal must it not have proved, had night not shut in and robbed the victor of half the fruits of conquest? Even had the Castle of Alba been defended, that darkness which permitted Clausel to retire his routed divisions, and carry off guns and trophies, whose loss was otherwise inevitable, would have but added to the confusion, and increased the difficulty of retreating in the presence of an unbroken army; and consequently, the ruin of the French must have been consummated before assistance could have reached them, and those arms effected a junction, by which they were enabled to outmarch their pursuers, preserve their communications, and fall back upon their reserves.

Still the moral results of the battle of Salamanca were manifold. That field removed for ever the delusory belief of French superiority; and the enemy fatally discovered that they must measure strength with opponents in every point their equals. The confidence of wavering allies was confirmed; while the evacuation of Madrid, the abandonment of the siege of Cadiz, the deliverance of Andalusia and Castile from military occupation, and the impossibility of reinforcing Napoleon during his northern campaign, by sparing troops from the corps in the Peninsula—all these important consequences arose from Marmont's defeat upon the Tormes.

If then, when but considered as a successful battle, Salamanca had such results, how much more was a victory to be prized, which, in its more expansive consequences, influenced the fate of Europe! It occurred at the most momentous crisis of the war—Napoleon, with a countless army, was across the Niemen—Russia was to be humiliated or saved—and the Continent, subjugated or delivered. Had Marmont

been victorious on the Tormes his success would have been hailed as the forerunner of Napoleon's. In Spain, the apathy which succeeds despair, would have checked as hopeless all further attempts at resistance. In Britain, party clamour, like smothered fire, would have broken out with redoubled violence; and when her exertions were most called for to liberate the Continent from its thraldom, the energies of England must have been paralysed—for what Minister would dare to peril the resources of the country in a distant struggle, when her blood and treasure had been profusely lavished in the Peninsula, and produced nothing but disappointment and defeat? Now the political horizon had brightened. The victory at Salamanca—the fearless attitude of Russia—the growing disaffection of the Germanic confederacy—all foretold that French despotism was at its zenith, and that Napoleon's strides upon the ladder of ambition would be downward.

CHAPTER XVII

In the beautiful village of San Ildefonso—which place the allies reached on the 8th—Lord Wellington rested his troops for a day, and allowed the right to close up, preparatory to entering the passes of the Guadarama. On the 10th, the entire army crossed the mountains unopposed—Joseph Buonaparte, after a reconnaissance with Marshal Jourdan, having detached a strong force to escort his crowded Court, which on that morning had abandoned the capital, forming a convoy of 3,000 carriages and 20,000 people, and on the morning of the 12th, the French garrison closed the gates of the Retiro. At noon, the advanced guards of the allies entered the city amid the acclamations of the populace; and never did a delivering army receive a more enthusiastic reception.

The position of Lord Wellington might now have been considered as one of pride and promise. A succession of brilliant operations had ended with the possession of Madrid—an event in itself forming a brilliant epoch in Peninsular history. It told that Wellington held a position and possessed a power that in England many doubted, and more denied; and those, whose evil auguries had predicted a retreat upon the shipping, and finally an abandonment of the country, were astounded to

find the allied leader victorious in the centre of Seville, and dating his general orders from the palace of the Spanish kings. The desertion of his capital by the usurper, proclaimed the extent of Wellington's success ; and proved that his victories were not, as had been falsely asserted at home, "conquests but in name."

And yet never had Lord Wellington's situation been more insecure than at this bright, but deceptive era. At the opening of the campaign, the fertility of the country enabled his antagonist to command every necessary for his subsistence ; for all that his army required was exacted with unscrupulous severity. The allied general had no such resources to rely upon. The British Government would not, even in an enemy's territories, carry on war upon so inhuman and iniquitous a system ; but it exposed its army to privations, and its general to perplexities and difficulties, which might have paralysed any weaker mind than Lord Wellington's, by the parsimony with which it apportioned his means. When he advanced from Salamanca, there were but 20,000 dollars in the military chest ; the harvest was abundant, but how was bread to be obtained without money ?—and the same want would be felt in bringing his supplies from Ciudad Rodrigo and other places in the rear of that fortress ; the very difficulty of removing his wounded to the frontier of Portugal being sufficient to deter him from seeking an action on the Douro.

In the capital he found nothing but misery and want. The iron grasp of the usurper had wrung from a once proud city, not only the means by which an ally could be succoured, but those that were necessary for their own existence and support. But yet the wild enthusiasm that hailed him when he appeared might have intoxicated a weaker-minded conqueror. The blessings of the people accompanied him wherever he went. The municipal authorities gave a bull-fight in his honour, and when he appeared in the royal box, the air rang with the repeated shouts of not less than 12,000 spectators. "He could not walk abroad by daylight because of the pressure of the multitudes who gathered round him ; even in the dark, when he went into the Prado, though he and his suite were dressed in blue great coats in hopes of escaping notice, they were generally recognised and followed by crowds, the women pressing to shake hands, and some even to embrace them." But this was that hollow and idle exultation, which expends itself in noisy ebullitions, and leads to no important results—and the

intuitive quickness of Lord Wellington saw how valueless were the professions of the Spaniards.

He says, writing to Lord Bathurst, "I do not expect much from their exertions, notwithstanding all we have done for them. They cry *Viva*, and are very fond of us, and hate the French; but they are in general the most incapable of useful exertion of all the nations that I have known: the most vain, and at the same time the most ignorant, particularly of military affairs, and above all of military affairs in their own country." Instead of, by a vigorous application of the energies of the people and the resources of the State, seconding the mighty efforts made, and making by Great Britain, the Cortes wasted day after day in the most ridiculous discussions—one hour inventing new constitutions, and the next determining the precedency of a saint; and in the fifth year of the war, the Spaniards were precisely what Sir John Moore had described them in the first, "without an army, without a Government, and without a general."

When intelligence reached Lord Wellington that Clausel had come down the valley of the Pisuerga,—the 1st, 5th, and 7th British Divisions, two Portuguese brigades (Pack's and Bradford's), the German heavy cavalry, and Anson's light brigade, were directed by rapid marches on Arevalo; and, on September 1st, he left the capital, and assumed the command. On the 6th, the allied army forded the Douro, and reached Valladolid on the 7th; Clausel having abandoned that city on the preceding evening. Hoping that Castanos would join him as he had promised, Lord Wellington halted during the 8th, while the French leisurely fell back through the valleys of Pisuerga and Arlanzon.

The line of march by which Clausel retreated, and Lord Wellington advanced, was equally picturesque and fruitful. In patriarchal wealth, no valleys on the Peninsula were richer; for everywhere an abundance of corn, wine, and oil was found. To an advancing army these supplies were most valuable; and to a retreating one, this route gave great facilities of defence. The enclosures, so frequent in a highly cultivated district, presented continued obstacles to the march of the allies; while numerous ridges crossed the valleys, and with their flanks appuied upon the mountains which rose boldly on either side, afforded at every mile a position that could be vigorously defended. Of these local advantages Clausel availed himself, "and baffled his great adversary in the most surprising manner. Each day he offered battle, but on ground which Wellington was

unwilling to assail in front, partly because he momentarily expected the Galicians up, but chiefly because of the declining state of his own army from sickness, which, combined with the hope of ulterior operations in the south, made him unwilling to lose men. By flank movements he dislodged the enemy; yet each day darkness fell ere they were completed, and the morning's sun always saw Clausel again in position. At Cigales and Dueñas, in the Pisuerga valley; at Magoz, Torquemada, Cordobilla, Revilla, Vallejera, and Pampliega, in the valley of the Arlanzon; the French general thus offered battle, and finally covered Burgos on the 16th, by taking the strong position of Cellada del Camino."

At last, however, his tardy ally came up, and on the 17th a Spanish corps of 12,000 men joined Lord Wellington. To force on a battle was now the great object of the English general; but Clausel, observing that his opponent had been largely reinforced, with excellent discretion declined an action, and retreated to Frandovinez. On the following night he retired through the town of Burgos, having been joined by Caffarelli, who had completed the necessary preparations for defending the castle. Both generals fell back to Briviesca, where a reserve, organised specially by Napoleon, and intended to remedy any disaster which might befal the army of Portugal, united itself with the French corps.

When the advanced guards of the allies entered Burgos, the city was in the greatest confusion. The French had fired some houses, which would have covered the approaches of a besieging army; and the Partidas, intent only on plunder, were marauding in all directions. Fortunately the flames were arrested, and the guerillas restrained by the exertions and influence of Carlos d'España; and, by the arrival of Lord Wellington, order was completely restored.

On September 19th the castle was regularly invested, and the duties of the siege intrusted to the 1st and 6th Divisions, with the brigades of Pack and Bradford, whilst to General Dubreton, with a picked garrison of 2,500 men, the defence of it was confided. The castle was amply provisioned; nine heavy guns, eleven field pieces, and six howitzers and mortars, were already mounted on the works; and as the depôt for the army of Portugal had been established within the walls, the French commander had an abundant supply of stores and artillery, and was thus enabled to increase his means of offence to any extent that he pleased, while in guns and ammunition the besieging

army were so miserably deficient, that from the very day of the investment, Lord Wellington expressed strong doubts whether he should succeed in his operations.

The hill of St. Michael had been selected as the best point from which the French defences could be battered. And that night it was determined by Lord Wellington, that the horn-work should be stormed. And although the attack was irregularly executed, gallantry succeeded, and the horn-work was carried by its gorge; the casualties on the part of the assailants were unusually numerous, while those of the defenders were returned at but 143.

Until the night of the 22nd, the operations of the siege were vigorously continued; the garrison maintaining a heavy fire of shot and shells upon the working parties. Anxious, therefore, to abridge the attack, Lord Wellington decided on carrying the exterior defences of the castle by escalade, and then form a lodgment on the wall; and that night the assault was given. Major Laurie of the 79th, with detachments from the different regiments before the place, formed the storming party. The Portuguese, who led the attack, were quickly repulsed; and though the British entered the ditch, they never could mount a ladder. Those who attempted it were bayoneted from above, while shells, combustibles, and cold shot were hurled on the assailants, who, after a most determined effort for a quarter of an hour, were driven from the ditch, leaving their leader, and half the number who composed the storming party, killed and wounded.

After this discouraging failure an attempt was made to breach the walls; but the more commanding fire of the castle disabled the few guns placed by the engineers in battery; and nothing remained but to resort to the slower but more certain method by sap and mine. A mine was driven forward, and a new breaching battery erected—and although every day brought with it a serious loss, on October 4th, two eighteen-pounders and three howitzers were placed in battery on the hill of St. Michael; and their fire was so well directed and maintained, that at four o'clock in the afternoon, the breach was completely exposed, and the mine loaded, tamped, and made ready for explosion.

This assault met the success that it so well deserved. The mine was sprung at five o'clock, and its effect was ruinous; the wall came down in masses—the explosion shattering the masonry for nearly one hundred feet, and blowing up many of the garrison. "The assault was conducted with the greatest

regularity and spirit. In an instant the advanced party were on the ruins ; and, before the dust created by the explosion had subsided, were in contact with the defenders on the summit of the breach. The party to assault the breach were equally regular and equally successful ; and, after a struggle of a few minutes, the garrison were driven into their new covered way, and behind their palisades."

The remainder of the siege may be compressed into general occurrences. Lord Wellington, from the enormous expenditure of musket cartridges, which his weakness in artillery had rendered unavoidable, felt it necessary to change his system of attack : and while the white church was assailed with hot shot, a gallery was commenced against that of San Roman. The former operation failed—the latter, however, was continued with better success.

The old breach in the second line was cleared again by the fire from the horn-work. A new one, on the 18th, was declared practicable ; and Lord Wellington determined to storm them both, while a strong detachment was to escalade the front of the works, and thus connect the attacks upon the breaches.

At half-past four in the evening, a flag was displayed on a hill west of the castle, as a signal that the mine was sprung. The troops instantly rushed to the breaches—and both were carried most gallantly. The guards escaladed the second line ; and some of the German legion actually gained the third. But the supports did not come up as promptly as they should ; and the French governor, with a powerful reserve, rushed from the upper ground, drove the assailants beyond the outer line, and cleared the breaches. No troops could have fought more gallantly than the storming parties ; but numbers prevailed over valour, and the attack consequently failed. The allied loss on this unfortunate occasion was severe.

The explosion of the mines had destroyed the greater part of the church of San Roman, and the assailants effected a lodgment among the ruins ;—but the following night the enemy sallied, drove out the picket, and for a short time obtained possession of the building.

The ruins were once more cleared of the enemy, and a gallery commenced from the church against the second line—but the siege was virtually at an end. The troops had been gradually drawn to the front, in consequence of threatening movements of the French army,—and on the 20th, Lord Wellington gave the command of the investing force to Major-

General Pack, and joined the divisions which hitherto had covered the operations against the castle. On the evening of the 21st an official order was given to raise the siege. And thus a general of consummate abilities, and a victorious army, were obliged to retire unsuccessfully from before a third-rate fortress, "strong in nothing but the skill and bravery of the governor and his gallant soldiers," after—the casualties which occurred between the 18th and 21st being included—sustaining a total loss of 509 officers and men killed, and 1,505 wounded or missing; a loss in numbers nearly equalling the garrison of the place.

When Lord Wellington sat down before Burgos, the army of Portugal remained cantoned along the Ebro with an advanced guard only at Briviesca. There under the immediate direction of Massena, who had been sent specially by Napoleon to the northern provinces, its several divisions were reorganised and brought into a fit condition to take the field. The Prince of Essling, however, under a plea of illness declined the command, naming General Souham his successor.

A formidable force was now collected between Burgos and Vittoria; as the army of Portugal, with the reinforcements received from France, and by its junction with Cafferelli's corps, amounted to 45,000 fighting men. On October 3rd, Souham assumed the command; but, totally deceived as to the strength of the allied corps round Burgos, which at the French head-quarters were supposed to amount to 60,000 men, with numerous partida corps, besides three British divisions at Madrid, he waited for intelligence from Valencia, in order that his movements should correspond with those of the other marshals and the king. Swarms of guerillas, however, interrupted all communication between the separated corps; and at last, he was indebted to the English newspapers for correct information regarding the strength and position of an army, from which he was distant but a few marches. Learning, therefore, that Soult had marched from Granada, and Joseph was intent upon the recovery of his capital—that no reinforcements of any consequence had reached Lord Wellington, and that the actual force of the allied army was not more than half what had been represented, Souham determined to save Burgos if possible.

The position of Lord Wellington when the French army advanced from Briviesca, was certainly the most dangerous of any in which he had been previously, or indeed, was subsequently placed. His whole force consisted of 21,000 Anglo-Portuguese, 11,000 Spanish regulars, and the guerilla cavalry of Julian

Sanchez and Marquiñez. The British and German horsemen were under 2,500 sabres ; and the artillery, including twelve ill-appointed Spanish guns, numbered but forty-two pieces, and these of an inferior calibre. The French army were all good soldiers, and exceeded the allies by twelve thousand men ; while in those important arms, cavalry and artillery, they were immeasurably superior, as Souham had more than sixty guns, and 5,000 admirable horsemen. In offering battle, Lord Wellington had not only stronger numbers to contend against, but his local position was most dangerous ; while the spirit of his army, from recent reverses, had become depressed, and even its discipline had declined. Intelligence, however, reached the allied general on the 20th that decided him not only on refusing to abide an action, but also upon raising the siege. Joseph was advancing towards the Tagus ; that river had become in many places fordable, and was consequently insecure ; the fall of Chinchilla had opened the road from Valencia ; while by the treachery of Ballasteros, La Mancha was undefended, and the surrounding country and its resources consequently left for Soult to deal with as he pleased. To secure a junction with Hill was now become a measure of imperious necessity—a retreat was unavoidable—and to be successful, it must be promptly and rapidly effected.

Two routes were open by which the allies could fall back. That by the bridge of Villaton was safe from present interruption, but it was longer by a march ; Lord Wellington therefore determined to cross the Alanzon at Burgos, although the operation was critical, as the army must defile over fords or bridges enfiladed by the artillery of the castle.

Having apprised the engineers that he intended to withdraw the covering force next morning, such stores and ordnance as could not be removed were wasted or disabled, the French guns buried, and their carriages destroyed ; and at eleven that night the artillery commenced their retreat by the Villaton road, carrying off the heavy guns and howitzers.

"Finding, however, from the badness of the roads and weak state of the bullocks, that they could not get on with the three 18-pounders, they knocked all their trunnions off, demolished their carriages, and left them on the road ; after which, they continued their march to head-quarters at Frandovauez, with the five howitzers and a French 4-pounder, which they reached early the next morning."

To defile an army across bridges within musket range of

the castle batteries, was an operation that required both rapidity and silence. All was secretly prepared for the attempt—the wheels of the gun carriages were muffled with straw—and after dark the position was quietly abandoned. Although the night was moonlight, such was the good order observed by the troops, that the 1st Division passed over without losing a man, or provoking the fire of the place.

"There is no doubt that this dangerous passage would have been accomplished without discovery, had not some guerilla horseman rashly galloped over, and betrayed to the garrison the movement of the allies then in progress. In anticipation of the attempt, the guns of the works had been already trained upon the bridge, and, consequently, the first discharge from the French artillery was destructive; but the range was lost after a round or two, and in the darkness it could not be recovered. By this bold and well-planned manœuvre, Lord Wellington extricated his entire baggage and field equipage; and the allies were placed on the other side of the Arlanzon, and in the direct line of their retreat, with a loss comparatively trifling.

In a retreat, an hour gained or lost may make or mar its fortune; and Lord Wellington reached Cellada del Camino and Hormillas before Souham was apprised that the allied position had been abandoned.

Having secured the bridges, Lord Wellington halted on the Douro for the two-fold purpose of affording rest to the divisions, and time for commissariat arrangements to be effected, which the want of means of transport and the desertion of the muleteers had rendered most difficult. On the 26th, Souham continued his pursuit, taking, however, the right bank of the river, and thus avoiding an action. On the 27th, the whole of the French army were displayed in front of Cabezon—but they gave the allies no annoyance, excepting by a distant cannonade. For the first time during the retreat Lord Wellington was enabled to correctly ascertain the strength of the army that followed him—and that knowledge determined him to retreat immediately behind the Douro, and eventually, should circumstances require it, across the Tormes. Accordingly, Sir Rowland Hill was directed to abandon the Tagus altogether, and retreat by the passes of the Guadarama; and thus by uniting the allies on the Adaja, enable Lord Wellington to attack the armies of the south and centre, and prevent the intended junction between them and that of Portugal.

On the 28th the French, extending by the right, endeavoured to force the bridges at Simancas and Valladolid, which the brigades of the 7th Division successfully defended. The enemy then detached troops to Tordesillas; but that bridge was effectually destroyed, and the regiment of Brunswick Oels posted in the ruins, to prevent its being repaired and rendered passable.

A chivalrous and successful exploit rendered, however, Lord Wellington's precaution unavailing. A detachment of the Brunswick Light Infantry occupied a tower behind the ruined arch, and the remainder of the regiment had sheltered themselves in a pine wood.

"The French arrived and seemed for some time at a loss, but very soon sixty French officers and non-commissioned officers, headed by Captain Guingret, a daring man, formed a small raft to hold their arms and clothes, and then plunged into the water, holding their swords with their teeth, and swimming and pushing their raft before them. Under protection of a cannonade, they thus crossed this great river, though it was in full and strong water, and the weather very cold, and having reached the other side, naked as they were, stormed the tower. The Brunswick regiment then abandoned its position, and these gallant soldiers remained masters of the bridge."

Guingret's success produced an immediate change in Lord Wellington's intended operations. Abandoning his regressive movements, he marched by his left, and boldly took a position on the heights between Rueda and Tordesillas, holding the enemy sternly in check, and thus preventing them from profiting by their daring enterprise. The bridges at Toro and Zamora had been rendered impassable—and aware that time would be necessary before the river could be passed, the allied leader halted until the 6th, awaiting the result of Hill's movements, by which it was expected that he would gain the Adaja on the 3rd.

During these important operations, the casualties on both sides had been severe; and from the time the retreat commenced until the allies halted on the heights of Rueda, they sustained a loss of nearly nine hundred men.

In the meantime, Hill was executing the orders he had received with his accustomed zeal and success; and as he had a discretionary power from Lord Wellington, either to retire by the valley of the Tagus or the passes of the Guadarama, he chose the latter. After destroying the stores in La China, and burning his pontoons, he quitted the capital, and concentrated the whole of his divisions near Majadahonda on October 31st.

On November 2nd the armies of the south and centre united in the vicinity of Madrid ; the king entering the capital on the 3rd, and Soult moving slowly after his allies. On the 4th, after restoring the authorities who had been deposed, Joseph rejoined the Duke of Dalmatia.

Hill, in the meantime, had been marching upon Arevalo, when Wellington's orders altered the line of his retreat. The bridge of Toro had been rendered passable sooner by several days than had been expected, and hence, other combinations became necessary. To unite with Hill, and attack the army of the south, would now be dangerous, as before it had been desirable—for Souham, with both Toro and Tordesillas in his possession, could fall upon the allied rear ; while, if Hill reached the Douro, the want of bridges or pontoons would secure Souham from attack, while Soult, by taking the route of Fontiveros, could reach the Tormes before the allies. Sir Rowland accordingly was directed to march rapidly on Alba de Tormes, while Wellington fell back on his old position—the heights of San Christoval. These movements were simultaneously effected—and the allied general, for the third time, placed his divisions upon ground that had already been immortalised by his victory.

The position of the allied army extended from San Christoval to the right bank of the Tormes at Aldea Lengua—and to the bridge of Alba, on the left. Three hundred Spaniards garrisoned the castle ; the town being defended by a brigade of the 2nd Division, under Major-General Howard, on the right of the river, supported on the left by Hamilton's Portuguese. Another brigade of the 2nd Division was posted in the neighbourhood of the fords of Encinas and Huerta ; and the 3rd and 4th Divisions remained at Calvarrasa de Arriba. The light division and Spanish infantry were in Salamanca—Pack's brigade occupied Aldea Lengua—Bradford's were at Cabrerizos—and the British cavalry beyond the river covered the front.

The allies were thus posted when the united armies of the north, south, and centre, whose junction had been already secured, advanced to the Tormes.

Well might Lord Wellington describe that period of the campaign, from the night upon which he abandoned the height of St. Michael, until he halted before the Arapiles, as "the worst military situation" in which a British general had been placed. With a weak and dispirited army he commenced a retreat of two hundred miles, followed by a force physically and numerically superior.

Other circumstances added seriously to Lord Wellington's embarrassments. The relaxed discipline of the soldiers had risen to an alarming height, and the more so, because the privations they endured were but temporary, and their marches not unusually severe. The excesses of the soldiery at Torquemada were fully equalled by Hill's rear-guard at Valdemoro—and hundreds of these besotted wretches were picked up by the enemy in the cellars they had plundered. Drunkenness produced cruelty—and many of the peasantry hitherto well affected to the allies, perished by the hands of infuriated savages, who seemed reckless whether friend or foe became the victim of their ferocity. On the first day's march from Madrid, seventeen murdered peasants were reckoned either lying on the road or thrown into the ditches.

But the most serious cause for Lord Wellington's displeasure arose in the misconduct of some regimental officers, and the indifference of more ; and those feelings in the commander were increased, by recollecting the zeal and devotion with which his orders had been hitherto obeyed. Apathy among inferior officers, however, was not the only annoyance the allied general had to contend against : for at this trying time, men were found who presumed to question the dispositions of their chief, and actually disobeyed the orders he had given.

On the last day of the retreat, when the allies fell back from the Huebra to Rodrigo, the broken surface of a country, "flat, marshy, and scored with water-gullies," rendered the recession of the columns without loss or confusion a very delicate operation. Lord Wellington had made the necessary arrangements to effect his object ; and Napier records the following singular but characteristic occurrence, which the orders of the allied general produced :—

"Knowing that the most direct road was impassable, he had directed the divisions by another road, longer, and apparently more difficult ; this seemed such an extraordinary proceeding to some general officers, that, after consulting together, they deemed their commander unfit to conduct the army, and led their troops by what appeared to them the fittest line of retreat ! Meanwhile Wellington, who had, before daylight, placed himself at an important point on his own road, waited impatiently for the arrival of the leading division until dawn, and then suspecting something of what had happened, galloped to the other road, and found the would-be commanders stopped by that flood which his arragements had been made to avoid. The insubor-

dination and the danger to the whole army were alike glaring, yet the practical rebuke was so severe and well-timed, the humiliation so complete, and so deeply felt, that, with one proud sarcastic observation, indicating contempt more than anger, he led back the troops and drew off all his forces safely. However, some confusion and great danger still attended the operation; for even on this road one water-gully was so deep that the light division, which covered the rear, could only pass it man by man over a felled tree; and it was fortunate that Soult, unable to feed his troops a day longer, stopped on the Huebra with his main body, and only sent some cavalry to Tamames. Thus the allies retired unmolested."

With this occurrence, the difficulties of the retreat terminated, —the French desisting from their pursuit, and the allies reaching the high grounds near Rodrigo, which afforded plenty of fuel for their bivouacs, while ample supplies were forwarded from the city for their use. Immediate assistance was despatched to succour sick or wounded men who had straggled from the line of march; and the British light cavalry and guerillas of Julian Sanchez succeeded in recovering fifteen hundred of these wanderers, who had escaped the enemy's patrols, and were perishing in the woods from cold and hunger.

Head-quarters were established at Ciudad Rodrigo on the 20th, and part of the allied army cantoned in the surrounding villages, and along the banks of the Agueda; while Hill was detached with a strong corps and the Spanish division of Penne Villemur into Estremadura, and having crossed the Sierra de Gata on the 18th, he occupied Coria on the 20th.

One of the unavoidable annoyances to which commanding officers are exposed, is to have operations still in progress criticised by persons who cannot understand the numerous combinations by which a great result can only be obtained. This was strongly evidenced during the memorable retreat to the Agueda; and it would afford a useful lesson to the young soldier to turn to the newspapers of that day and remark the ignorance and presumption with which the operations of the allied general were censured by English journalists at home, on the authority of persons then with the army, to whom the complicated movements of Lord Wellington were perfectly unintelligible. In their letters to England rapid marches were described as preliminary measures for an abandonment of the Peninsula, and the sudden alterations in the line of the retreat, which secured the safety of the army, were described as the sure forerunners

of disaster. But to those splendid displays of genius which marked the operations throughout, they were insensible. The initial movement when the Arlanzon was safely crossed under the batteries of Burgos—the prompt decision with which Wellington took a position at Rueda, and paralysed the efforts of his opponent, at the very moment when the daring exploit at Tordesillas had opened, as Souham supposed, a certain path to victory—the well-placed confidence with which he offered battle on that glorious field, where "Marmont's rashness had been fixed with a thunder-bolt," and, by beautiful movements, Soult's cautious skill rendered unavailing—all these fine strokes of generalship were overlooked, and in the British capital the destruction of the allied army on the Tormes was announced as inevitable, at the very moment when it was reposing on the banks of the Agueda, after the fatigues of one of the ablest retreats which history records.

CHAPTER XVIII

WINTER set in, and Lord Wellington took up cantonments best suited to restore the health and discipline of the soldiery, and fit them for that memorable campaign, which closed the military dynasty of France and the contest on the Peninsula. The head-quarters of the French armies were settled early in December; that of the south occupied Toledo; the northern was at Valladolid; and Joseph, with the centre and his guards, took post at Segovia.

The allies were distributed as extensively as security with comfort would permit. Coria and Placencia were occupied by Hill, having a strong detachment in Bejar. Two divisions had their cantonments in Upper Beira, and round Castello Branco. Of the Spanish corps, one retired to Galicia, another into Estremadura, and a third garrisoned Ciudad Rodrigo. The allied infantry were quartered with the light division and Anson's cavalry on the Agueda, and the remainder on the banks of the Douro. The cavalry moved to the valley of the Mondego, excepting the Portuguese who were collected at Moncorvo.

Four months of continued operations had occasioned enormous losses both to the allies and the enemy. But though in total amount the French might have been considerably greater,

their numbers had never deteriorated, for their casualties were more than replaced by the reinforcements which continually joined them. With the allies the case was different; for the troops sent out from England bore no proportion to those expended in the recent contest. In the opening of the campaign the balance was heavily against the French; and from the advance across the Douro on July 18th, until they repassed that river, on the 30th, their loss had exceeded fourteen thousand men, while that of the allies was under six thousand. But from the time that Burgos was invested until the Huebra was crossed, the allied casualties, occasioned chiefly by the drunkenness and insubordination of the soldiery, rose fearfully above the enemy's; as during the operations of the double retreat, on a moderate computation, eight thousand men were killed, wounded, or made prisoners.

Both armies felt a necessity for repose; and although Lord Wellington was assured that Soult intended to break into Portugal by the valley of the Tagus, and the report was strengthened from the circumstance of the French marshal remaining with his corps well in hand upon the upper Tormes; still, though he disbelieved that such was Soult's design, the allied commander took precautionary measures for securing the pass of Perales, and by the position of his cantonments rendering his troops disposable should an emergency require it. But the allied cantonments were undisturbed—as Wellington had exercised his usual judgment in the choice of a position. By the Tagus, the Douro, and the Mondego, he possessed the immense advantage of water-carriage, and "having also the interior and shorter lines, he was in a more menacing position for offence, and a more easy position for defence; wherefore, though he had ordered all boats to be destroyed at Almarez, Arzobispo, and other points where the great roads came down to the Tagus, the French, as anxious to prevent him from passing that river as he was to prevent them, sent parties to destroy what had been overlooked. Each feared that the other would move, and yet neither wished to continue the campaign—Wellington, because his troops wanted rest, more than one-third being in the hospitals; the French, because they could not feed their men, and had to refix their general base of operations, broken up and deranged as it was by the guerillas."

To recover the health of the troops was Lord Wellington's first care; his next was to restore their discipline, and reorganise the army anew. Determined that the latter should

be effected, he addressed the officers commanding divisions and brigades, by a circular letter, dated Frenada, November 28th, 1812 :—

"GENTLEMEN,

"I have ordered the army into cantonments, in which I hope that circumstances will enable me to keep them for some time, during which the troops will receive their clothing, necessaries, etc., which are already in progress, by different lines of communication to the several divisions of brigades.

"But besides these objects, I must draw your attention in a very particular manner to the state of discipline of the troops. The discipline of every army, after a long and active campaign, becomes in some degree relaxed, and requires the utmost attention on the part of the general and other officers to bring it back to the state in which it ought to be for service ; but I am concerned to have to observe, that the army under my command has fallen off in this respect in the late campaign to a greater degree than any army with which I have ever served, or of which I have ever read. Yet this army has met with no disaster ; it has suffered no privations which but trifling attention on the part of the officers could not have prevented, and for which there existed no reason whatever in the nature of the service ; nor has it suffered any hardships, excepting those resulting from the necessity of being exposed to the inclemencies of the weather at a moment when they were most severe.

"It must be obvious, however, to every officer, that from the moment the troops commenced their retreat from the neighbourhood of Burgos on the one hand, and from Madrid on the other, the officers lost all command over their men. Irregularities and outrages of all descriptions were committed with impunity, and losses have been sustained which ought never to have occurred. Yet the necessity for retreat existing, none was ever made on which the troops had such short marches ; none on which they made such long and repeated halts ; and none on which the retreating armies were so little pressed on their rear by the enemy.

"We must look, therefore, for the existing evils, and for the situation in which we now find the army, to some cause besides those resulting from the operations in which we have been engaged.

"I have no hesitation in attributing these evils to the habitual

inattention of the officers of the regiments to their duty, as prescribed by the standing regulations of the service, and by the orders of this army.

. . . . . .

"But I repeat that the great object of the attention of the general and field officers must be to get the captains and subalterns of the regiments to understand and perform the duties required from them, as the only mode by which the discipline and efficiency of the army can be restored and maintained during the next campaign."

This strong expression of Lord Wellington's displeasure, while it occasioned murmurings in the army, added to the discontent at home which his failure at Burgos had caused. Two great parties divided the nation: those who supported the Government, and advocated the policy of a Peninsular war—and those who, from bitter opposition, refused credence to the most unequivocal successes, and magnified every reverse that could hold out the remotest promise of ending in ulterior disappointment. To the latter party, the issue of the campaign afforded an opportunity of renewing those evil auguries, which Salamanca had falsified, and Napoleon's ruinous efforts against Russia had rendered nearly as much unheeded as "the cry of wisdom in the street." The failure at Burgos gave a new colour to those clamours; and in England the retreat to the Agueda almost restored the balance of opinion respecting the expediency of abandoning the contest in Spain. The Ministerial party had expected far too much, and consequently their disappointment was proportionate; the Opposition had raised "the wolf-cry" until the country had ceased to dread it; and they caught desperately at what proved a last pretext, to reiterate their denunciations, and abuse him who conducted, and those who planned the war. Ministers were denounced for continuing the contest, and for "starving" it; Lord Wellington both for inactivity and for rashness—for doing too little and too much—for wasting time at Madrid, and for attempting a siege with such inadequate means, that nothing but the most profuse expenditure of blood could afford even a forlorn hope of its succeeding.

The great efforts of the Whigs were reserved for the meeting of Parliament, which occurred in the end of November. The speech of the Prince Regent, which after stating that the south of Spain had been delivered by the battle of Salamanca, proceeded to observe, that notwithstanding a siege had failed,

and the capital had been from necessity abandoned, still the results of the campaign had been generally encouraging, and the Spanish cause had become more promising than before, occasioned a warm and protracted debate; and while Ministers defended their conduct, the Opposition as rudely attacked it.

To Lord Wellington, and to Ministers, these discussions were equally disagreeable. One felt the consciousness that a grand military conception should have commanded the brilliant success that it deserved, and that to evil influences, at home and abroad, its failure was only to be attributed. The other, no matter how honest the intentions, had found too late, that they had paralysed the blow while they should have strengthened the arm of the victor. Men and means were all that Wellington required at Madrid, to have brought a brilliant opening to a triumphant end—and both were disposable in England—and, by a fatal indecision, both were withheld.

Lord Wellesley's *exposé* carried with it that conviction, which the reiteration of political abuse never can effect. Diseases yield to rough remedies when gentler treatment fails. The groundwork for constructing the most perfect army that modern Europe produced, may be traced to the unpopular address of Lord Wellington—and that splendid campaign, no longer bounded by some Spanish river, but closing on "the sacred soil of France," owed the spirit and munificence of its support to the coarse but salutary castigation, which the Whigs, from political rancour, bestowed upon a Ministry, whose intentions were as honest as their conduct had been censurable.

While the nation, as well as the Parliament, were inquiring into the causes that had produced the recent failures on the Peninsula, Lord Wellington, having disposed of his army in the best quarters he could obtain, turned his chief attention to the organisation of an effective force, with which he designed to take the field, and as early in the ensuing spring as green forage could be procured for the cavalry. From England, he had the most encouraging assurances that all necessary supplies and reinforcements should be sent out without delay; and hence, he might calculate with certainty on being able in the month of April to collect the most imposing British force which had as yet appeared on the Peninsula. Could the native armies be brought into a sufficient state of organisation to render them available for the purposes of a campaign, a very powerful auxiliary force would also be created. But constructed as they were, in

Spanish troops no dependence could be placed—for, with the best spirit, their services were found at times more dangerous to their allies than their enemies. The evil, however, was not without its remedy. By steady discipline, and a proper application of the resources of the country, Lord Wellington considered that the military establishment of Spain might yet be regenerated ; and on receiving a copy of the decree of the Cortes, by which he was nominated to the chief command, after expressing his thanks for their confidence, he communicated through the Minister of War a candid statement of what the Spanish armies were ; and also pointed out the only means by which they might be made efficient.

"I certainly was not aware, till very lately, of the real state of the Spanish army, or I should have hesitated before I should have charged myself with such an herculean labour as its command ; but having accepted the command, I will not relinquish the task because it is laborious and the success unpromising ; but will exercise it as long as I shall possess the confidence of the authorities who have conferred it upon me. It will be necessary, however, that the Government should arm me with powers to enable me to perform this task. It is my opinion,

"First ; that officers should be promoted, and should be appointed to commands, solely at my recommendation.

"Secondly ; that I should have the power of dismissing from the service those whom I should think deserving such punishment.

"Thirdly ; that those resources of the State which are applicable to the payment, or equipment, or supply of the troops, should be applied in such a manner as I might recommend.

"Fourthly ; in order to enable me to perform my duties, it will be necessary that the chief of the staff, and such limited number of the staff officers of the army as may be thought necessary, should be sent to my head-quarters ; and that the Government should direct that all military reports of all descriptions should be sent to me ; and I shall, of course, make my reports to your excellency."

In the meantime, Napoleon's failure in Russia began to display its evil influence on the French interests in the Peninsula. The war there had now become a secondary object. Europe was in arms,—and that throne, which a hundred victories had raised, was tottering. The spell of Napoleon's invincibility had been destroyed, and Talleyrand's prophecy was hurrying to its fulfilment. It would have been impossible to conceal

the extent of the loss that Napoleon's mad ambition had occasioned ; and when the order arrived for a heavy draft of veteran soldiers to repass the Pyrenees, the fact spoke trumpet-tongued, and told that the military power of France was shaken to its foundation. Soult, whom Napoleon justly estimated as his ablest lieutenant, was in this emergency suddenly recalled ; and in such haste, that he remained only one night at Valladolid, and set off on the 10th for France, taking in addition with him seven hundred chosen men from the army of Portugal, who were going to replace the Imperial Guard, and were waiting at Valladolid for an opportunity of proceeding ; a fact which in itself clearly proves the dread the French were in of the Partidas, when seven hundred chosen men dared not proceed without an escort. The best soldier in his service was taken by Napoleon from the Peninsula. It is true, that still in numbers the French armies were ostensibly kept up. The reserve at Bayonne had been ordered into Spain, and twenty thousand conscripts allocated for the Peninsula ; but these raw levies were a sorry exchange for the veterans they replaced. None knew better than Napoleon the value of a soldier inured to war ; and it was too evident that nothing but a stern necessity could have induced him to remove the flower of his army from the soil on which his footing daily became less firm.

In the meanwhile, every day added to the strength of the allied armies ; and while, with increased liberality England drew largely on her astonishing resources, the experience of past years enabled the commander-in-chief to employ his increased means with vigour and advantage. The same uncompromising spirit that, regardless of popularity, had dictated at Frenada his letter of reproof, urged on a rigorous inquiry into abuses, which, when detected, ensured the punishment of the offender. Every military department underwent a searching reform. The hospitals were cleared of malingerers ; the depôts gave up their idlers ; and hundreds who, under varied pretexts, would have otherwise evaded their duties, and remained in the country a dead burden on the Government, were forced back to the colours they had deserted.

While every man capable of bearing arms was thus gathered to his regiment, the internal economy of the army, and the *matériel* for the ensuing campaign, had been proportionately improved and increased. A fine pontoon train was completed ; and a number of carts, specially adapted for the rough roads

they had to traverse, were built for the use of the divisions. Light camp-kettles and tents added to the comforts of the soldiers—while hospitals were conveniently established in the rear, and *ambulances* organised to accompany the army to the field.

Owing to the measures adopted in the Peninsula, with the assistance he received from home, in April, Lord Wellington had under his command 200,000 fighting men, which, taken as a whole, was the finest force that ever Britain had embattled. Its *matériel* was truly magnificent, for abundant supplies and powerful reinforcements had arrived from England. The Life and Horse Guards had joined the cavalry; and that arm, hitherto the weakest, was increased to nineteen efficient regiments. The infantry had been recruited from the militia—the artillery was complete in every requisite for the field—and a well-arranged commissariat, with ample means of transport, facilitated the operations of the most serviceable force that had ever been placed under the leading of an English general.

Of these masses of armed men, the flower was the Anglo-Portuguese army. It was composed of 45,000 British troops, and 28,000 Portuguese—all were effective soldiers—strong in health, buoyant in spirit, and perfect in discipline. Upon the Spaniards also a surprising reformation had been wrought, since the Cortes had placed them under Lord Wellington's control. The regular troops had been fed, clothed, armed, and organised—the Partidas, improved in general efficiency; and as they now received and obeyed the orders of the allied leader, the daring and activity were usefully directed which formerly had been unprofitably employed in loose and desultory operations. Besides the Anglo-Sicilian force at Alicant, amounting to 16,000 men, four Spanish armies, exclusive of the reserve in Andalusia, were ready to take the field. The first, or Catalonian, under Copons, mustered above 6,000. The Murcian, under Elio, amounted to 20,000. A third in the Morena, commanded by Del Parque, consisted of 12,000 thousand; while the fourth, under Castanos, was the strongest of the whole—for, with the army of Estremadura, that of Galicia, under Giron, the Asturians, under Porlier, and the guerillas of Julian Sanchez, Mina, and Longa, it amounted to 40,000 men, without including the small Partida bands who generally assisted in its operations.

While the strength and spirit of the allied armies had thus progressively increased, those of the enemy in both had suffered a material abatement. The former had been weakened by the

drafting into Germany of 20,000 veteran soldiers; and the latter was seriously depressed from the defection of Prussia, following as it did so rapidly on the frightful reverses the Russian invasion had occasioned. As usual, in the councils of the French generals there was little unity, and consequently, no sound results. Jealous of each other, they all, with few exceptions, disliked and despised the king, and openly contemned his authority. Indeed, Joseph's situation was anything but enviable. The orders he issued to the marshals were sometimes treated with indifference, and at others totally disregarded. Abroad and at home the clouds were gathering; and while he saw the coming storm, he had neither mind nor means to delay or divert it from bursting. From many of his generals he would not receive advice, as they were objects of his distrust; and, as the plans of his abler brother were too far-sighted for him to comprehend, he refused to act up to the directions of Napoleon. Other causes added to his embarrassments. For weeks together his communications with France were interrupted—the transition of supplies rendered insecure—the revenue had dwindled away, and the treasury was left without a guinea.

Nothing could be more perfect than the skill with which Lord Wellington masked his intended operations. By the disposition of his corps, the formation of his magazines, and the false information he ingeniously conveyed to the enemy, he misled the French generals, who saw so many plans open for his adoption, that it was impossible to guess that which he was most likely to select. He might turn their right by forcing the passage of the Tormes on the Douro—or by Avila and the valley of the Tagus march direct upon Madrid. He might then choose the north for the scene of his operations; or he might move southward, and unite with the Anglo-Sicilian army under Murray. All these plans were probable; all were discussed by Joseph and his generals, but they failed in penetrating Lord Wellington's true designs, and the blow was struck before the quarter where it was first felt had been suspected.

The plan of the allied general was a splendid military conception. Aware that the defences of Douro had been strengthened, he determined to avoid the danger and delay which would be required in forcing them; and by a fine combination of the Anglo-Portuguese army with that of Galicia, he gained the northern bank of the river, taking in reverse the line of defensive posts on the Douro, and opening to attack the whole right flank of the French army, whose scattered corps were too loosely

cantoned to admit of rapid concentration. "Thus seventy thousand Portuguese and British, eight thousand Spaniards from Estremadura, and twelve thousand Galicians—that is to say, ninety thousand fighting men, would be suddenly placed on a new front, and marching abreast against the surprised and separated masses of the enemy, would drive them refluent to the Pyrenees. A grand design, and grandly it was executed! For high in heart and strong of hand Wellington's veterans marched to the encounter; the glories of twelve victories played about their bayonets, and he the leader so proud and confident that in passing the stream which marks the frontier of Spain, he rose in his stirrups, and waving his hand, cried out 'Farewell, Portugal!'"

On April 21st Sir John Murray had received orders to commence operations in conjunction with the Spaniards; but those of Lord Wellington were delayed from heavy rains having broken the roads and prevented the pontoon train from getting forward. On May 15th, that difficulty was surmounted, and five divisions of infantry, two brigades of cavalry, the pontoon equipage, and the artillery, were all thrown across the Douro—the infantry marching from the lower Esla, and the cavalry moving to Braganza. When Graham, who commanded the left of the allies, was considered to be sufficiently advanced, Lord Wellington, on the 22nd, put the right of the army into motion, and directed his march towards the Tormes. The strength of this corps was nearly twenty-eight thousand men. It was composed of the second and light British divisions, Morillo's Spanish, and Amarante's Portuguese infantry, with five brigades of cavalry, in which the corps of Julian Sanchez was included. The right, commanded by Sir Rowland Hill, marched by the pass of Bejar on Alba de Tormes, while the left, under Wellington himself, advanced on Salamanca by Matilla. On the 26th the different columns simultaneously approached the Tormes, while Villatte, abandoning Alba, but anxious to ascertain in what strength Lord Wellington was advancing, took a position on the high grounds above the ford at Santa Martha in front of the city of Salamanca.

The experiment was bolder than prudent; for in his retreat, Villatte was overtaken near Aldea Lengua, and charged by the British cavalry. The horsemen were very gallantly repulsed, and the French general succeeded in extricating the column, but not without considerable loss. The heat was so intolerable that two hundred sank dead in the ranks, and an equal

number were made prisoners, while a leading gun having been overturned in the defile of Aldea Lengua, six others were thus retarded, and the whole, together with their tumbrils, fell into the allies' hands.

Even still the French were profoundly ignorant of Lord Wellington's true design ; and Villatte's retreat on Medina del Campo, was evidently intended to expose the flank of the allies to an attack by the bridges at Zamora and Toro. The allies pushed forward on the 27th and 28th—the left towards the former, and the right towards the latter—while Lord Wellington, leaving the command with Hill, hurried off to observe the movements of his left wing ; and after passing the Douro, at Miranda, by a rope and basket, he reached Carvajales on the Esla upon the 30th.

The difficulties encountered by Graham in his route through the Tras os Montes had been ably surmounted ; but the passage of the Esla had occasioned a serious delay, and thus prevented the surprise and consequent separation of the French armies. On the 31st, although the water was swollen, a part of the hussars and light infantry forded the river at Almendra, and captured an enemy's picket at Villa Perdrices. The pontoon bridge was immediately laid down, and the whole of the allied left wing was promptly sent across.

On June 1st, the allies entered Zamora, the French falling back on Toro ; and at Morales, their rear-guard was overtaken and attacked by the 10th Hussars, supported by the 15th. The enemy's cavalry, formed in two lines, waited and received the British charge ; and nothing could be more brilliant in both its execution and success. The French 16th was totally overthrown, losing two hundred prisoners, which, with its other casualties, rendered that fine regiment for a time unserviceable. A singular proof was given in this affair of the indifference with which a people familiarised to danger, look upon events that others regard with terror. Though the fighting was almost in the streets of Morales, the Spaniards were now so accustomed to sights of war, that within ten minutes after the firing had ceased, the women were spinning at their doors, and the little children at play, as if nothing had happened.

The allied army had now secured its junction on the Douro —that river being fordable—while Julian Sanchez had surprised the French picket at Castra Nuno, and driven their outposts from the fords at Pollas. Finding that the enemy were concentrating, Lord Wellington halted on the 3rd, to allow the

Galician army to close upon his left, and give time to the columns to get forward whom the passage of the Esla had delayed. On that evening the allies were finely combined. Wellington, in his open advance, had scarcely been checked for an hour—while Graham had conducted forty thousand troops, with every appurtenance that war requires, over a country hitherto considered impassable. The artillery and pontoons had traversed roads which even a muleteer accounted bad; and, stranger still, the operation was completed before the initial movement was known by the enemy! "The field was now clear for the shock of battle, but the forces on either side were unequally matched. Wellington had ninety thousand men, with more than one hundred pieces of artillery. Twelve thousand were cavalry; and the British and Portuguese present with the colours were, including sergeants and drummers, above seventy thousand sabres and bayonets: the rest of the army was Spanish. Besides this mass, there were the irregulars on the wings, Sanchez's horsemen, a thousand strong, on the right beyond the Douro; Porlier, Barcena, Salazar and Manzo on the left between the Upper Esla and the Carrion. Saornil had moved upon Avila; the Empecinado was hovering about Leval. Finally, the reserve of Andalusia had crossed the Tagus at Almaraz on the 30th, and numerous minor bands were swarming round as it advanced. On the other hand, though the French could collect nine or ten thousand horsemen, and one hundred guns, their infantry was less than half the number of the allies, being only thirty-five thousand strong, exclusive of Leval. Hence the way to victory was open, and on the 4th Wellington marched forward with a conquering violence."

Unable to arrest the progress of an army too powerful and too well combined to be checked, Joseph had no alternative but to fall back and leave that capital for ever, to which he had so long held with culpable tenacity. Napoleon had urged him repeatedly to send away his heavy baggage, and remove everything that would impede the abandonment of Madrid; but his advice had been disregarded. The Emperor had also directed that Burgos should be strengthened and provisioned; but the place was unprovided with magazines, and the new works which had been commenced were not only incomplete, but, as they commanded the old defences, the castle could not hold out four hours. Hence, it was determined that the French corps should fall back behind the Ebro, and the artillery and

stores, previously collected in the depôts of Madrid, Burgos, and Valladolid, were ordered to be hastily removed to Vittoria, whither the Court of the intruder, and the Spaniards who had attached themselves to his cause, were also directed to proceed.

The abandonment of Madrid presented one of those remarkable scenes incident to the war; the bustle attending a march of troops being accompanied by the confused departure of that portion of its population, whose political opinions have been favourable to a foreign usurpation. "Persons of rank, forced from their hitherto comfortable homes, were intermixed with all orders of the community, and alike contemptuously treated by the French troops. Quantities of carriages, cars, waggons, or laden mules, were urged onward to join the cavalcade, while numerous groups of the remaining population witnessed these departures with silent but expressive contempt. Many were wretched in appearance, and some of them incapable of undergoing any great degree of bodily fatigue. Their lamentations or declarations of inability were listened to with stoical indifference, and the bayonets of the amused French soldiery goaded them forward on their way."

On the 7th, Lord Wellington crossed the Carrion; Joseph, with the armies of the south and centre, falling back on Burgos, and Count Reille, with that of Portugal, retiring by Castro Xerez. The allied leader, however, turned the line of the Pisuerga with his left wing, while the right, under Hill, marched direct on Burgos. Reille, who had been outflanked, having regained the Burgos road, appeared determined to retire no farther; and having taken a strong position, with the Hormosa in his front, his right resting on a height above Hormillas, and his left on the Arlanzon, he waited for the allies to come up.

Joseph had sent reiterated orders to Foy and Clausel to hasten to his assistance—and in the expectation that these corps would arrive, he calculated on making Burgos the termination of his retreat. Accordingly, with the armies of the south and centre he halted behind Estepar; and in this position, the tidings of Napoleon's victory at Bantzen was communicated to the army. But his hopes were speedily dispelled. On the 12th, Lord Wellington appeared, and promptly advanced against the range of heights which extend from Hormillas to Estepar. His right flank being turned by the British light troops, Reille was obliged to cross the Arlanzon by the bridge of Baniel,

during which operation he was severely cannonaded by the horse artillery, and charged by the 14th Light Dragoons. The French behaved with great steadiness, and by a rapid movement crossed the river, losing, however, a few men, with a gun that had been previously disabled.

Never had a campaign opened with brighter promise, nor proceeded with more continued success. It seemed indeed "the march of victory." Obstacles, from which another general might have turned, were no sooner presented than overcome; and with slight loss, the Tormes, the Esla, the Douro, the Carrion, the Pisuerga, and the Arlanzon, were crossed as if they had contained no water. Through a country abounding in positions, and with a surface of great natural strength, the French corps had been driven with all the precipitation that attends a beaten army; and a fortress, which unequal means for its reduction had a few months before rendered impregnable, presented nothing but a mass of rubbish, after entailing, like the feast-house of the Philistines, ruin on its possessors. How proud must have been Wellington's feelings as he looked at that place of fallen strength! Once he had receded from its walls,—but it was to return with a power of his own creation, that rendered resistance unavailing, and obliged those who had maintained it so well, to level its ramparts in despair. "Dubreton's thundering castle" had disappeared—and that height which an army could not carry, was now defenceless as an open village!

The stand which Joseph had designed to have made at Burgos he hoped now to effect at Miranda, trusting for his security to the Ebro, until the long-expected succour should arrive under Clausel and Foy, and add a reinforcement that would enable him to risk a battle. The army of the centre, accordingly, took post at Haxo, that of Portugal, at Espejo and Friars, while that of the south, occupied Miranda, covered by the castle of Pancorbo. The king's fancied security was speedily dispelled; for one of Wellington's bold and beautiful conceptions was already in full operation.

On the 13th, the allied army was put in march to gain the sources of the Ebro. The Galicians with the British left wing crossed the river next day, by the bridges of Rocamunde and San Martin. The centre followed on the 15th—while Sir Rowland Hill passed the right wing over by the Puente de Arenas. Thus the French were suddenly cut off from the sea-coast, and their immediate evacuation of all the ports, excepting Santona and Bilbao, was the result. Portugal no longer was to

be the depôt for Wellington's supplies ; a new base of operations was obtained, and the Tagus was abandoned for the sea-coast of Biscay.

To gain the road leading to Bilbao from Burgos, was now the great object of the allied general Leaving the 6th Division at Modena de Pomar, for the protection of his stores, Lord Wellington marched with the remainder through one of the most difficult countries that an army had ever traversed. Hill and valley—roaring torrents and dry ravines—every difficulty found in an alpine district—all were met, and all were surmounted. At times, the labour of an hundred soldiers was required to move forward a piece of artillery ; at others, the gun was obliged to be dismounted, lowered down a precipice by ropes, or swayed up the rugged goatpaths by the united efforts of men and horses judiciously combined. "Strongly did the rough veteran infantry work their way through those wild but beautiful regions ; six days they toiled unceasingly ; on the seventh, swelled by the junction of Longa's division, and all the smaller bands which came trickling from the mountains, they burst like raging streams from every defile, and went foaming into the basin of Vittoria."

While this grand operation was in progress, the surprise of the enemy was excited, by finding that the immediate line of their retreat was not only unmolested by the allies, but that a convoy, which it would have required an army to protect, was permitted to retire without endangering a single carriage. The routes left of the great Burgos road were believed by the French generals to be impracticable for the movements of an army ; and in this supposition, they were confirmed by the reports of the peasantry. Days passed away, the retreat continued unmolested ; on the 10th no enemy had appeared, and the allies, it was concluded, were remaining quietly in their quarters. The apathy of the English general was extraordinary, and prisoners were asked by their French escort, "Was Lord Wellington asleep ?"

But the astonishment of the enemy was indescribable, when on the evening of the 18th, information reached their headquarters, announcing the astounding intelligence, that the whole of the allied divisions were established on the left bank of the Ebro ! The bold and successful operations of the allied general had now seriously endangered the position of the French armies, and, as usual, the generals were at variance in their opinions regarding the course which Joseph should adopt. Reille

strongly advised the expediency of marching by the right bank of the Ebro into Navarre, and forming a junction with Suchet. The king, however, still reckoned on being strengthened by Clausel, or by the remainder of Foy's corps, of which Sarrut's division had already joined—and unwilling to abandon his immense convoys, he adopted the fatal resolution of retreating on Vittoria.

On clearing the defiles of La Puebla, the armies of the centre and south halted in the valley of the Zadorra,—the former taking a position on the heights in front of Arinez, with their left upon the Zadorra, at Tres Puentes, and their right resting on the high and broken ridge which stretches between that river and the Ega—the latter forming a second line in front of the village of Gomecho—while, on falling back from Subijana de Morillas, the army of Portugal took possession of the heights of Zuazo,—thus presenting an interior or third line, and in the immediate front of the city of Vittoria.

The valley, in which these armies with all their *matériel*, and a fugitive Court and its encumbrances, were collected, from one extremity, at the pass of Puebla, to the other, at Vittoria, extends for ten miles over a broken surface ; its extreme breadth being probably about eight. The Zadorra, a narrow stream with steep and rugged banks, winds through this basin in its course towards the Ebro, and passes close to the city. The river enters the valley at the defiles of Puebla, issuing between bold and rocky heights—on the right overhung by that of Puebla, and on the left by those of Morillas. The course of the stream severs the valley into unequal parts, the right being the more extensive ; but the royal road traverses the left bank. On that side, stands the village of Subijana de Morillas—commanding the pass which the army of Portugal disputed, while Gazan and D'Erlon were receding with the armies of the south and centre.

In the distance the spires of Vittoria are visible from the opening of La Puebla, and a city with a name already consecrated by former deeds of arms, was now about to receive a new celebrity.

On the evening of the 19th, the city of Vittoria presented a scene of indescribable confusion, in which alarm and display were singularly blended. Joseph, with his staff and guards, the entire Court, and the head-quarters of the army of the centre, accompanied by an endless collection of equipages, intermingled with cavalry, artillery, and their numerous ambulances, occupied the buildings and crowded the streets. An unmanage-

able mass of soldiers and civilians were every moment increased by fresh arrivals, all vainly seeking for accommodation in a town unequal to afford a shelter to half their number.

But a yet stranger scene was enacting outside Vittoria. While the city was brilliantly illuminated in honour of the pseudo-king (and a gayer sight could not be fancied than its sparkling interior presented), beyond the walls an army was taking a position, and a multitude of the peasants were forced by the French engineers to assist in throwing up field defences, and thus assist those who had ruled them with an iron hand, to place their guns in battery, and make other military dispositions to repel the army of those allies, who were advancing to effect their deliverance.

Although Joseph nominally commanded the united armies, to Marshal Jourdan, and the generals of division under him, the dispositions for the battle were entrusted. "During the morning of the 20th, great excitement, attended with feverish and unsteady feeling, seemed to have taken possession of the inhabitants and their numerous visitors. They had ascertained the near approach of the allied army, and in the act of occupying so extensive a position as that selected by Marshal Jourdan, great activity and constant movement were perceptible ; troops passed through the town, and the sound of artillery and carriage wheels became incessant—while the immense convoy that had left Vittoria appeared to have produced slight effect in relieving the crowded state of the town.

At daybreak on the 21st, a second convoy, in which the king's baggage was included, left Vittoria, under the protection of the division of Maucune. Its extent was immense ; and as it wound through the beautiful valley which the road to Irun traverses, the train of carriages and waggons appeared interminable. Every preparation was made for the approaching conflict, and the final dispositions of the French armies were leisurely completed.

The army of Portugal, reinforced from that of the south, formed the French right wing, commanding the roads from Bilbao and Durango, where they cross the Zadorra by the bridges of Gamara Mayor and Ariaga. Here, the river turning round the heights of Margarita at a sharp angle, presented for the French centre a new front. This was occupied by the army of the south,—their centre across the royal causeway in front of Arinez, whilst the right appeared on a bold knoll above the hamlet of Margarita, and the left extended behind Subijana de Alava ; its flank protected by Maransin's brigade,

which occupied the heights of Puebla. The army of the centre was placed in reserve ; the royal guard, a number of guns, and most of the French cavalry being massed around the village of Gomecha. Batteries overlooked the bridges, and commanded all the passages of the Zadorra.

Although the position selected by Marshal Jourdan was generally strong, and well chosen to effect the objects for which he risked a battle, still it had one material defect :—its great extent would permit many simultaneous efforts to be made by an attacking army ; and accordingly, on the following day, the allied leader, with admirable skill, availed himself of this advantage.

Such were the general dispositions of the enemy—and in none of the Peninsular battles were nicer combinations required than for its attack. That was to be made on many points—and to be effective, the most exact calculations as to time and movements were indispensable. It was impossible for Lord Wellington to bring up to an immediate proximity for attack every portion of his numerous army ; and hence, many of his brigades had bivouacked on the preceding night a considerable distance from the Zadorra. Part of the country before Vittoria was difficult and rocky ; hamlets, enclosures, and ravines, separated the columns from each other ; hence some of them were obliged to move by narrow and broken roads—and arrangements, perfect in themselves, were liable to embarrassment from numerous contingencies. But the genius that directed these extended operations, could remedy fortuitous events, should such occur.

In numerical strength, the advantage was with Lord Wellington ; in military composition, it remained with Joseph Buonaparte. Deducting the 6th Division left at Medina del Pombar, the allies had sixty thousand Anglo-Portuguese, with twenty thousand Spanish troops upon the field. Of this force ten thousand were cavalry ; and the artillery had ninety pieces of cannon. The French were inferior by ten thousand ; but in cavalry, they were stronger ; and in artillery, superior by sixty pieces. As an army, nothing could be more perfect—the variety of colour and costume forming a striking contrast to the simpler uniforms of the allies. But the appearance of the whole was soldierly—the cavalry was superb—the guns, caissons, and their appointments were perfect—and the horses, attached to every arm, in excellent condition.

Before day, on the morning of the 21st, the French army

was in position, and the British and their auxiliaries were in march to attack it. In four columns, the allies approached the bridges of the Zadorra ; Sir Rowland Hill, with the right wing, marched by Puebla ; Wellington, with the right centre to which the light division had been attached, advanced to Nanclares ; the left centre made a circuitous movement, to seize the bridges of Tres Puentas and Mendoza ; while Graham, with the left wing, marched by the Bilbao road, to gain the bridge which crosses the river between the villages of Abechuco and Ariaga.

The mists still hung upon the mountains, and as yet the movements of both armies were concealed. At nine o'clock the fog cleared, and in brilliant sunshine "battle's magnificent array" was suddenly and splendidly exhibited.

Vittoria, in Ossian's language, might have been described as "a day of battles ;" for the different attacks of the allied columns, though all tending to one grand result, respectively produced close and sanguinary combats. War has its picturesque side—and the opening of Vittoria was singularly imposing. "Not a drum was heard"—a wide expanse of rich and varied landscape on which an artist would have gazed with rapture, was reposing in a flood of sunshine. From a gentle eminence in front of Arinez, the whole array of Joseph's army was visible ; and on that height the allied staff were collected. There, Lord Wellington was standing, dressed plainly in a grey frock coat, with nothing to mark commanding rank excepting a Spanish sash and the hat and feathers of a field officer. His telescope at one moment wandered over the extensive position occupied by the enemy, and the next turned with fixed earnestness upon that point from whence he expected the crash of battle was to burst. The spattering fire of the French light troops opened from the side of the mountain, while Morillo's corps debouching from the woods that clothed the bottom of the Sierra, brought on a heavy and sustained fire, which announced that the heights were boldly attacked and as obstinately defended. The Spanish efforts to carry them were brave, but unsuccessful. The fusillade continued, and the enemy remained unshaken. In a few minutes more, the smoke-wreaths which had risen steadily over the summit of the mountain, gradually commenced receding—and Cadogan's brigade moving along the ridge, was seen advancing with that imposing steadiness which ever gives assurance of success. The hill was won—but, alas ! on its summit lay their chivalrous leader ; and till the haze of death had closed his

sight, there, at his own request, he remained to "look his last" upon the battle. For a long time the fight was doubtful, as on each side reinforcements came into action. But when Hill, clearing the defile of La Puebla, seized the village of Subijana de Alava, the enemy's repeated efforts to win back their lost ground, though vigorously continued, proved unavailing.

Meanwhile, on the extreme left Graham's artillery was faintly heard, and told that there also the conflict had begun, while the light division, under the guidance of a peasant, crossed the Zadorra by Tres Puentes, and boldly established itself under a crested height on which the French line of battle had been formed. Before the bridge of Nanclaus, the 4th Division was waiting until the 3rd and 7th should arrive. Presently, Picton and Lord Dalhousie appeared, and the whole of the allied columns moved rapidly to their respective objects of attack. The 3rd Division crossed the river by the bridge of Mendoza and a ford—the 7th, with a light brigade, followed closely—the 4th Division was already on the other side—Hill was pushing the enemy back—and on the left the thunder of his guns redoubled, and showed that Graham was advancing rapidly into action.

Nothing could be more beautiful than the military spectacle these simultaneous movements exhibited. The passage of the river—the movement of glittering masses from right to left, far as the eye could range—the deafening roar of cannon—the sustained fusillade of infantry—all was grand and imposing; while the English cavalry, displayed in glorious sunshine, and formed in line to support the columns, completed a *coup d'œil* magnificent beyond description.

The subsequent advance of the allied columns against the enemy's right centre was beautifully executed, as, in echelons of regiments, it crossed that hallowed ground on which tradition placed the chivalry of England, when the Black Prince delivered battle to Henry the Bastard, and by a decisive victory replaced Don Pedro on the throne. As if animated by some glorious impulse, the battalions advanced "not to combat but to conquer." Colville's brigade of "the fighting third" led the attack, and the first enemy's corps that confronted it was gallantly defeated. "Pressing on with characteristic impetuosity, and without halting to correct the irregularity a recent and successful struggle had occasioned, the brigade encountered on the brow of the hill two lines of French infantry, regularly drawn up and prepared to receive their assailants. For a moment the result was regarded

with considerable apprehension, and means were adopted by Lord Wellington for sustaining the brigade, when—as that event seemed inevitable—it should be repulsed by the enemy. But valour overcame every disadvantage, and the perfect formation of the French could not withstand the dashing onset of the assailants. Their rush was irresistible—on went these daring soldiers, sweeping before them the formidable array that, circumstanced as they were, appeared calculated to produce annihilation.

The day was evidently with the allies; but the French, covered by a swarm of skirmishes and the fire of fifty guns, retired on their reserves, which were posted in front of Gomecha. The village of Arinez became now the scene of a desperate conflict, and from its importance, this advanced post was desperately maintained. Checked in his assault after having seized three pieces of artillery and a howitzer, Picton returned lion-like to the charge, and with the 45th and 74th Regiments, drove the French at the bayonet's point fairly through the village. Defeated thus in front, and their left flank turned at Subijana de Alava, the wreck of the armies of the south and centre made a last stand between the villages of Ali and Armentia, while that of Portugal still bravely maintained itself on the upper Zadorra. But this final struggle was succeeded by a total deroute. The left wing of the allies was furiously engaged; and the heights of Abechuco, the village of the same name, and the bridge at Gamarra Mayor, were all successively attacked, and all carried in splendid style after being desperately defended. The contest now was ended—the southern and central armies were seen in full retreat by the road on the right of Vittoria leading towards Salvatierra—the allies were advancing on every point—momently, the enemy's confusion increased—the guns were abandoned, and the drivers and horses went off at speed. The soldiers pressed wildly through a road already choked with the refugees from the capital, and the countless vehicles which accompanied their flight—and a scene of indescribable disorder ensued.

"The sun was setting, and his last rays fell upon a magnificent spectacle. Red masses of infantry were seen advancing steadily across the plain—the horse-artillery at a gallop to the front, to open its fire on the fugitives—the hussar brigade charging by the Camino Real—while the 2nd Division, having overcome every obstacle, and driven the enemy from its front, was extending over the heights upon the right in line, its arms and appointments flashing gloriously in the fading sunshine of 'departing day.'"

Never was a victory more complete, nor an army so thoroughly disorganised as the beaten one. Morning rose on three united corps, perfect in every arm, admirably combined, and disposed in a position leisurely and advisedly selected ;—night closed upon a helpless rabble, hurrying from the field that had witnessed their defeat, and on which, all that renders the soldier formidable and effective was abandoned.

Like the Scottish monarch at Flodden, Joseph remained to witness

The ruin that his rashness wrought ;

but not to expiate his folly with his life. His inglorious retreat was effected with difficulty ; for Captain Wyndham observed his flight, and riding with a squadron of the 10th Hussars after the fugitive king, overtook and fired at his carriage. Obliged to save himself on horseback, the intruder effected his escape under the protection of an escort too powerful for his daring pursuers to attack. Nothing, however, but his person was rescued ; for his coach, and every valuable it contained, fell into the hands of the conquerors.

Night closed upon the victors and the vanquished—and darkness and broken ground favoured the escape of battalions flying from the field in mob-like disorder, and incapable of any resistance had they been overtaken and attacked. Two leagues from Vittoria the pursuit was abandoned—but the horse-artillery, while its fire could reach the fugitives, continued to harass the retreat by a discharge of shells and round shot. Reluctantly, Lord Wellington returned to the city, which he entered about nine in the evening. Two nights before, Vittoria displayed a blaze of light in honour of King Joseph's presence : now all betrayed panic and confusion—every door was closed—every lattice darkened—while a solitary lantern placed in front of each house, gave to the streets a sombre and mournful appearance

During the progress of the battle, three leagues over a difficult surface had been traversed ; and the long summer day was consumed in an unremitting succession of laborious exertions. Night, however, was not to the wearied conquerors a season of repose ; for property, in value and variety such as no modern army had abandoned, presented itself at every step, and the work of plunder commenced before the fire of musketry and cannon had ended. The camp of every division was like a fair ; benches were laid from waggon to waggon, and there the soldiers held an auction through the night, and disposed of such booty as had

fallen to their share to any who were inclined to purchase it. Even dollars became an article of sale—for as they were too heavy to be carried in great numbers, eight were offered for a guinea.

It was, however, reserved for the dawn of morning to display the extent of the spoil which the beaten army had been obliged to leave at the disposal of their conquerors ; and the country in front of Vittoria for several leagues exhibited a scene which rarely has been equalled. There lay the wreck of a mighty army ; and plunder, accumulated during the French successes, and wrung from every part of Spain with unsparing rapacity, was recklessly abandoned to any who chose to seize it. Cannons and caissons—carriages and tumbrils—waggons of every description—all were overturned or deserted—and a stranger *mélange* could not be imagined than that which these enormous ambulances presented to the eye. Here, was the personal baggage of a king—there, the scenery and decorations of a theatre—munitions of war were mixed with articles of *virtu*—and scattered arms, drums, silks, embroidery, plate, and jewels, mingled in the strangest disorder. One waggon was loaded with money ; another, with cartridges—while wounded soldiers, deserted women, and children of every age, everywhere implored assistance, or threw themselves for protection on the humanity of the victors. Here, a lady had been overtaken in her carriage —in the next calash, was an actress or *fille-de-chambre*,—while droves of oxen were roaming over the plain, intermingled with an endless number of sheep, goats, mules, horses, asses, and cows. With the most lamentable confusion the grotesque was also ridiculously combined—camp followers were arrayed in the State uniforms of Joseph's Court—and the coarsest females who accompany a camp, drunk with champagne and bedecked "in silk attire," flaunted in Parisian dresses which had been envied by the denizens of a palace.

The *matériel* of three armies was lost—their pride and confidence were lowered to the dust—but the actual casualties sustained by the French in this most signal defeat, fell infinitely short of what might have been reasonably expected. The killed and wounded exceeded that of the allies only by one thousand, and an equal number was probably the amount of the prisoners. No regular account of either could be obtained, as the French invariably falsified their losses—but the low amount of these casualties was occasioned by local circumstances preventing those ruinous results which otherwise must have attended a total overthrow. "The country was too much intersected with

ditches for cavalry to act with effect in a pursuit ; and infantry, who moved in military order, could not at their utmost speed keep up with a rout of fugitives. Yet, precipitate as their flight was, they took great pains to bear off their wounded, and dismounted a regiment of cavalry to carry them on—and they carefully endeavoured to conceal their dead, stopping occasionally to collect them and throw them into ditches, where they covered them with bushes. Many such receptacles were found containing from ten to twenty bodies."

Although the greater portion of the baggage and plunder left on the field of Vittoria, with the contents of the military chest, fell into the hands of the Spanish peasantry and camp followers, still several interesting captures were secured. The sword of the fugitive king, and the bâton of his lieutenant, were brought to Lord Wellington, and both were transmitted to the Prince Regent. In the carriage of the intruder much valuable booty was discovered ; and a conclusive proof obtained that the spoliation of the country they invaded was systematic with the French armies, and that all plundered, from the private to the marshal. On searching Joseph's coach, the imperials were found stuffed with paintings of inestimable value in canvas rolls, abstracted from the royal palaces, and cut from their frames for an easier transmission into France. Of the fair sex, in variety and extent the capture was even greater than that of the *matériel* of the armies they accompanied ; and hundreds of women, comprising wives and mistresses, actresses and nuns, were deserted in the town or overtaken with the convoy. All were treated with kindness and respect ; and those who desired it were permitted to follow the retreating army whenever an opportunity was presented.

Of the many who fell into the hands of the victors, the lady of the commander of the army of the centre was included. Madame Gazan had quitted Vittoria on the morning of the battle, accompanied by her servants, and an only child, a boy of three years old. "When the day was utterly lost, in the confusion occasioned by the rush of carriages and the near approach of the firing, a *gendarme à cheval* rode up, proffering his assistance to the wife of his general. Her first impulse was securing the safety of her child, which the soldier undertook to be answerable for ; and, having placed the boy before him, rode off, soon disappearing in the crowd. General Darriceau, wounded, and retiring from the field, rode up and spoke to her ; but any attempt at extricating her carriage would have been

fruitless, and in it she remained until surrounded by the British cavalry."

A year destined to witness the most glorious displays of England's bravery as the tide of conquest flowed on in a series of unchecked success, brought to Lord Wellington a well-deserved addition to his honours. On January 1st, 1813, he was gazetted to the colonelcy of the royal regiment of Horse Guards, and on March 4th, elected a Knight of the Garter. On July 22nd, the Cortes proposed and the Regency offered, the fine estate of Soto de Roma in Granada, to the commander of their armies, "in the name of the Spanish nation, and in testimony of its sincere gratitude." But from his own Sovereign a higher honour was conferred upon the conqueror of Vittoria—and that flattering distinction was intimated to the allied general, in the graceful manner that might have been expected from one who had been pronounced "the most polished gentleman in Europe:"—

"CARLTON HOUSE, *3rd July*, 1813.

"MY DEAR LORD,

"Your glorious conduct is beyond all human praise, and far above my reward. I know no language the world affords worthy to express it. I feel I have nothing left to say, but devoutly to offer up my prayer of gratitude to Providence, that it has, in its omnipotent bounty, blessed my country and myself with such a General. You have sent me, among the trophies of your unrivalled fame, the staff of a French marshal, and I send you in return that of England.

"The British army will hail it with enthusiasm, while the whole universe will acknowledge those valorous efforts which have so imperiously called for it.

"That uninterrupted health and still increasing laurels may continue to crown you through a glorious and long career of life, are the never-ceasing and most ardent wishes of, my dear Lord, your very sincere and faithful friend,

"G. P. R.

"Field Marshal the Marquis of Wellington, K.G."

CHAPTER XIX

WHEN the army of the south was driven by the allies with trifling loss from the positions it had resumed in the fertile valley of the Bastan, excepting the army of Catalonia and the

garrisons of Pamplona and Sebastian, there remained not an armed Frenchman in the Peninsula, and Spain was delivered from her oppressors. Never had a campaign been briefer or more brilliant. In six weeks, and with scarcely one hundred thousand men, Lord Wellington marched six hundred miles, passed six great rivers, gained one decisive battle, invested two fortresses, and after driving one hundred and twenty thousand veteran troops from Spain, "stood on the summit of the Pyrenees a recognised conqueror."

Never had a general more reason to plume himself on the conquests he had thus obtained. The splendid plan of the campaign was his own conception—its execution was directed by himself—and by his unparalleled exertions and beneath his own eye, that noble force had been organised which inflicted a series of defeats upon an army hitherto supposed invincible. The Portuguese had recovered that efficiency which their wretched Government had destroyed ; and the Spaniards, hitherto proverbial for military misfortune, exhibited a wonderful improvement. For these advantages Wellington was indebted to himself.

Like the tidings of Marmont's disaster at Salamanca, the news of Joseph's defeat reached Napoleon at a crisis, when a lost battle was a calamity indeed. With him, every previous armistice had obtained concessions ; and had Vittoria terminated differently, battles in no way decisive, might from a fortunate success in Spain, have produced results similar to those of Marengo, Austerlitz, and Jena. With ominous rapidity, the intelligence reached every European Court, that Joseph had been driven from his throne, and Wellington overlooked the fields of France—and none could gainsay it—a conqueror. With what astonishment these tidings were received, those immediately round the person of Napoleon have since narrated. Nothing could be more humiliating—nothing, the time considered, more ruinous. His brother no longer prosecuted the war in Spain, but defeated and shaken in confidence, had sought shelter in the plains of Gascony. "Accustomed as he had been to receive reports from the Peninsula little calculated to give satisfaction, or to confirm his impression of the invincible qualities of those troops which he had personally ever led to certain victory, so extensive and alarming a reverse as that now made known must have been as unexpected as it was disastrous ; but with all the promptitude of a person born to command, instead of yielding to gloomy circumstances, he issued orders for a bold effort to

counteract the tide of war, to recover the ground lost by Vittoria, and to awaken to energy, as he conceived, the dormant spirit of his soldiers. Troops marched from the interior to reinforce, artillery from the depôts completed the equipment, and the marshal Duke of Dalmatia was entrusted with full powers to conduct the renewed hostilities, and retrieve the errors of his predecessors."

On July 1st, Soult was appointed lieutenant to the Emperor. His powers were plenary—amounting even to the removal of Joseph—and by force, if such an alternative should be required. That, however, was unnecessary. The fugitive monarch was weary of the mockery of a throne ; and he willingly retired from the command of an army, which had always borne his control with dissatisfaction, and under it, had experienced nothing but dishonour and defeat.

Soult's first care was to re-organise the beaten armies with the large reinforcements which had joined them since their defeat, into one grand corps entitled *L'Armée d'Espagne*. According to its new formation, it comprised nine divisions of infantry, divided into a right, centre, and left. The former was commanded by Reille, the centre by Drouet (Comte d'Erlon), the left by Clausel—and the reserve was placed under the orders of Villatte. The cavalry was also organised in three divisions, of which, two were of heavy dragoons, commanded by Generals Treillard and Tilly, with a light division under the marshal's brother, Pierre Soult. The lost artillery had been replaced—and on a scale fully equal to those fine parks which had been abandoned by the French army at Vittoria.

Never had the casualties attendant on a total defeat been more speedily or effectually remedied. On June 21st, the armies of the north, centre, and south, were utterly derouted—on July 21st, according to the imperial muster-rolls, Soult had under his immediate command, without including foreign corps and garrisons, 80,000 men, with 90 pieces of artillery. Such was the force collected in front of Wellington, when he commenced the siege of a fortress, already celebrated in military history.

Operations were commenced on the night of the 11th ; and the siege opened with more efficient means than Lord Wellington had previously possessed. Upwards of three hundred engineers and five hundred artillery men were present. Forty pieces, including guns, mortars, howitzers, and carronades, were already collected, which, at a subsequent period of the siege, were increased to one hundred and seventeen.

Although San Sebastian had been neglected by the French previous to the battle of Vittoria, that unexpected defeat at once rendered the fortress an object of paramount importance. On June 22nd, the convoy under General Rey reached the city, and the escort was directed to remain and form its garrison. The new commandant obliged the unfortunate refugees to continue their journey into France without protection ; and drove every stranger from the city, although the risk of falling into the hands of the Partidas was imminent, and in that event, destruction would have been inevitable, as from the hands of their indignant countrymen no mercy could be expected. Foy, during his retreat, left a reinforcement on the 27th ; and on July 1st, the garrison was further increased by that of Guateria, and a detachment of artillery and artificers from St. Jean de Luz. Thus upwards of three thousand men were now collected for its defence. Seventy-six heavy guns were mounted on the works, and subsequently, more reached the fortress by sea. Indeed, so imperfect was the coast blockade, that the French not only received supplies, but were enabled to send off their wounded men, and both were unmolested by the British cruisers.

The operations of the siege were rapidly continued ; and on the 20th the whole of the batteries opened their fire. On the evening of the 23rd the breaches were reported practicable, and the assault was consequently ordered to be given. In the rear of the great breach, however, the houses had taken fire ; and they burned so furiously, that it was deemed advisable to defer the storm for another day, and employ the interval in opening another breach between the main one and the half-bastion of St. John.

On the night of the 24th, the storming parties, amounting to about two thousand men of the 5th Division, entered the trenches on the isthmus ; and on the explosion of a mine formed in the extremity of a conduit that connected an aqueduct with the town, the assailants rushed forward.

At first the assault promised complete success. The counter-scarp and glacis of the horn-work were blown in, and the French abandoned the flank parapet, while those at the main breach also fell back behind the burning houses. The storming parties were nobly led. Major Frazer and the engineer officer topped the breach ; and with the greatest gallantry, but in broken order, many of the soldiery followed them. The attack, however, was irregular, and consequently inefficient. The boldest pressed to the summit of the breach ; but there a sheer descent

presented itself, while flames and smoke burst from the burning houses in their front, "and awed the stoutest;"—but the greater number of the assailants stopped at the demi-bastion, and unwisely opened their musketry, and returned the fusillade from the ramparts. That was a fatal error—the enemy rallied—manned the loop-holed houses commanding the great breach, and from front and flank opened a destructive fire on the stormers and their support, which darkness and local difficulties had paralysed in its advance. With restored confidence, the French, from every quarter, poured death upon the column. Shells from the citadel—grape from the flank defences—grenades and musketry from the houses, increased the panic and added to the slaughter. The regiments intermixed—and the confusion became consequently, irremediable. In vain, the leading officers partially rallied the troops and set them a glorious example. For a while, in one dense mass, confined between the horn-work and the river, unable to advance and unwilling to retire, the assailants steadily remained—but it was only to be slaughtered—till the chances of succeeding became so desperate, that those who survived reluctantly gave way and returned to the trenches.

The failure of the assault on San Sebastian was in every respect an unfortunate event; and the casualties were unusually severe. Five engineer officers, including their invaluable chief (Sir Richard Fletcher), with forty-four officers of the line, and five hundred and twenty men, were killed, wounded, or made prisoners.

As soon as it became fully daylight the garrison proposed a truce for an hour, which, being agreed to, they moved the wounded from the foot of the escarp wall into the place. On the expiration of the truce, the batteries commenced a regular fire on the breach to prevent its being cleared, or further re-trenched, which fire was maintained uninterrupted throughout the day.

On the following day Lord Wellington came over from Lesaca. His intention was to push on the siege vigorously; but the great expenditure of ammunition, and the insufficiency of the heavy ordnance, induced him to postpone his operations until an ample supply of siege artillery and stores should arrive, as expected, from England. He made, however, all necessary arrangements for the future operations, and after some consideration, it was decided to persevere in the same plan of attack; but with the increased ordnance to enlarge the breach from its left extremity to the salient angle of the left demi-bastion of

the land front, and by the fire of additional batteries, containing seven 24-pounders and four 8-inch howitzers to be established on the isthmus, to carry the breach from the salient angle of that bastion along its face to the end of the high curtain above it, so as to form one enormous opening or ascent of at least one hundred yards. Further, his lordship becoming acquainted with the general discouragement of the troops employed on the operation, and not being altogether satisfied with the recent assault, arranged that a body of volunteers should be obtained from the army generally, to bear the brunt of the next storming of the breaches —and in the meanwhile the trenches were to be held by a guard of eight hundred men.

Other circumstances, besides a scarcity of ammunition, obliged Lord Wellington to substitute a blockade for a siege. Soult was concentrating in front of the passes, and the allied force would have been unequal to shut up Pamplona, invest San Sebastian, and afford an army of sufficient strength to cover the double operation. Accordingly, orders were issued to disarm the batteries, and, with the exception of four pieces, remove the guns to Passages.

While this was being effected, the garrison made a successful sortie, in which they surprised and carried off two hundred and fifty Portuguese, and a few British soldiers.

From the moment that Soult announced his arrival, the greatest activity prevailed through the French cantonments, proving the high military estimation in which Napoleon's lieutenant was regarded by the army he commanded. On the 14th, the French marshal examined the whole line of the positions —directed that pontoons should be prepared—and, in a few days, he was ready to take the offensive.

Lord Wellington estimated the character of his opponent with justice, when he made preparations for immediate and vigorous hostilities. From past experience, he was well aware that the Duke of Dalmatia was as rapid in the conception of his plans, as daring in their execution—and notwithstanding the French general used every means to mask the true point on which he had determined to commence his operations, his able opponent, while expecting aggression on a different flank, made admirable arrangements to repel on every side the threatened attack.

The blockade of Pamplona was carried on by the Spanish corps of the Conde la Bispal, after the British division, which had first shut in the fortress, had been moved by Lord Wellington

to the front—and subsequently, O'Donel was joined by the division of Carlos d'España. Their united corps amounted to upwards of eleven thousand men—of whom seven thousand could be spared for field service, while the remainder would be fully sufficient to maintain the blockade effectually. La Bispal, however, dreaded an attack from the side of Aragon, but Lord Wellington felt that from that quarter no danger need be apprehended, as Mina and the Partida chiefs were in such force and activity as required all Suchet's efforts to ensure the safety of the French corps in the eastern provinces, without attempting any disturbance of the blockade.

A careful reconnaissance convinced Soult that the right of Lord Wellington's position, at Roncesvalles, was the point of attack best adapted to effect the relief of the fortresses, and most likely, from other circumstances, to prove successful. His own positions were close to those of the allies. He had fully twenty thousand men in front of the Anglo-Spanish infantry of Byng and Morillo, which barely amounted to five thousand bayonets—and while his lateral communications were short and easy, those of the allies were circuitous and difficult. Hence, while Soult from local advantages could readily collect his troops into masses, and with superior numbers press on the allied corps, in every point isolated from each other by the rugged surface that intervened between the different passes in the mountains; from this cause the allied front line could not, from want of roads, make flank marches to support each other. Each division, therefore, when attacked, had nothing but its own gallantry to depend upon—the rear was the only point from which relief could be expected—and time would be required to obtain it.

"Meantime the hostile forces, though each within their own frontier, were encamped in some places upon opposite heights, within half cannon-shot; and their sentries within a hundred and fifty yards of each other. Hitherto with the Spaniards and Portuguese it had been, in the ever-memorable phrase of Palafox, war at the knife's edge; but that national contest, in which the aggressors had treated courtesy and humanity with as much contempt as justice, was at an end; it was a military contest now, and the two armies offered no molestation to each other in the intervals of the game of war. The French, gay and alert as usual, were drumming and trumpeting all day long; the more thoughtful English enjoying the season and the country, looking down with delight upon the sea and the

enemy's territory, and Bayonne in the distance, and sketching, in the leisure which their duties might allow, the beautiful scenery of the Pyrenees."

This conventional tranquillity was short in its duration. Soult's dispositions were completed—his address issued to his army on the 23rd—and on the 25th he directed in person the opening movement of a series of attacks, as remarkable for the skill and bravery with which they were made, as for the dauntless gallantry that repulsed them.

Many sanguinary actions had been fought upon the Peninsula, but in none had the fighting been so desperate and protracted as in those designated "The Battle of the Pyrenees." It was an arduous struggle in which as much depended on the enduring courage of the men, as on the firmness and capacity of their commanders. The combats were fierce and desultory; and the whole extent of the position was frequently and severely tried. The failure of one division could not have been compensated by the success of the rest,—nor was a disaster recoverable,—as the loss of one pass would have compromised the security of the whole.

The mists hung thickly on the rugged heights which rose in savage grandeur around the post at Altobiscar, when Soult, covered by a swarm of sharp-shooters, pressed forward with heavy columns, well supported by artillery, to the assault. Noon came—the sun was shining on the mountain battle-ground; and for many an hour had he witnessed a deadly and obstinate conflict. The French were fighting with all the confidence which immense physical superiority will produce; while the allies, strong in courage and favourably posted for defence, evinced that stubborn gallantry which numbers cannot shake. Elevated thousands of feet above the lower country, the roar of musketry seemed incessant, as every volley was repeated by the mountain echoes, until, like the grumblings of distant thunder, a louder crash rendered the fainter sounds inaudible. Still, in numbers, the assailants momently increased; the Spanish right was threatened at Orbaiceta; the left, turned at Aizola; and Morillo, after a bold stand, was eventually obliged to retire on the pass of Ibaneta.

The battle was all but lost. Reille was close to Atalosti; and, interposing between the brigades of Byng and the Portuguese of Campbell, he had just crowned the summit of the Lindouz, when the head of Ross's column, at the same moment, gained that ridge.

"The moment was critical, but Ross, an eager hardy soldier, called aloud to charge, and Captain Tovey of the 20th, running forward with his company, crossed a slight wooded hollow, and full against the front of the 6th French Light Infantry dashed with the bayonet. Brave men fell by that weapon on both sides; but numbers prevailing, these daring soldiers were pushed back again by the French. Ross, however, gained his object: the remainder of his brigade had come up, and the pass of Atalosti was secured, yet with a loss of 140 men of the 20th Regiment, and forty-one of the Brunswickers."

D'Erlon's attack on the pass of Maya had been attended with even more slaughter than Soult's effort against the right, and the success was equally indecisive. Having assembled two strong divisions on the morning of the 25th, he made the necessary dispositions under cover of some heights, and at noon he commenced his operations.

Many circumstances promised success. Some feints against the smaller passes of Espagne and Lareta had deceived the British general, and led him to suspect that the first onset would be made on the Portuguese troops that defended them. But D'Erlon's real object was the gorge of Maya; and, by a pathway that enters that pass from Espalette, he was enabled to fall on the advanced picket and some supporting light companies so suddenly, and in such strength, that nothing but the superior bravery of these noble soldiers could have maintained ground for a moment against an overwhelming force.

From the unavoidable dispersion of the British regiments, they came to the support of the light troops separately; and consequently, in some cases, they were opposed to tenfold numbers. As might have been expected, they were obliged at last to yield ground; but every position was obstinately held, until General Barnes's brigade of the 7th Division came to their assistance, and checked the enemy's advance. The fighting lasted for seven hours; and 1,600 men were lost in this desperate and successful resistance.

On the 26th, Picton joined Cole, and took command of the 3rd and 4th Divisions. He retired slowly as Soult advanced; and next day took a position to cover Pamplona, and offered battle. Lord Wellington, on the 27th, left Hill's head-quarters in the Baztan; and, anxious to ascertain how matters went, he crossed the mountain ridge into the valley of the Lanz, and, proceeding to Ostiz, learned that Picton had fallen back from Linzoain to Huarte. Riding at full speed, he reached the village

of Sorauren, and his eagle-glance detected Clausel's column in march along the ridge of Zabaldica. Convinced that the troops in the valley of the Lanz must be intercepted by this movement, he sprang from his saddle, and pencilled a note on the parapet of the bridge, directing the troops to take the road to Oricain, and gain the rear of Cole's position. The scene that followed was highly interesting. "Lord Fitzroy Somerset, the only staff-officer who had kept up with him, galloped with these orders out of Sorauren by one road, the French light cavalry dashed in by another, and the English general rode alone up the mountain to reach his troops. One of Campbell's Portuguese battalions first descried him and raised a cry of joy, and the shrill clamour caught up by the next regiments swelled as it ran along the line into that stern and appalling shout which the British soldier is wont to give upon the edge of battle, and which no enemy ever heard unmoved. Lord Wellington suddenly stopped in a conspicuous place; he desired that both armies should know he was there; and a double spy who was present pointed out Soult, then so near that his features could be plainly distinguished. The English general, it is said, fixed his eyes attentively upon this formidable man, and speaking as if to himself, said, '*Yonder is a great commander, but he is a cautious one, and will delay his attack to ascertain the cause of these cheers: that will give time for the 6th Division to arrive, and I shall beat him.*' And certain it is that the French general made no serious attack that day."

Before Lord Wellington's arrival, Soult had been repulsed in an effort made against a hill occupied by a Spanish brigade, and the height had been reinforced by a British battalion. Some desultory skirmishing succeeded; but a violent tempest ended the contest for the day; and, no unusual occurrence in Peninsular warfare—a stormy night proved the forerunner of "a bloody morrow."

Twelve British regiments were embattled on the Pyrenees who had fought at Talavera; and there were present not a few who might recall an incident to memory, that would present a striking but amusing contrast. Cuesta, examining his battle-ground four years before in lumbering state, seated in an unwieldy coach, and drawn by eight pampered mules; Wellington, on an English hunter, dashing from post to post at headlong speed, and at a pace that distanced the best mounted of his staff.

At noon the French columns were formed for attack; and Clausel's 1st Division, covered by a swarm of sharp-shooters,

rushed boldly down the valley of the Lanz and turned Cole's left. But they were instantly and severely repulsed by the Portuguese brigade attached to the 6th Division, and driven down the height, while "almost at the same instant, the main body of the 6th Division emerging from behind the same ridge, near the village of Oricain, formed in order of battle across the front. It was the counter-stroke of Salamanca! The French, striving to encompass the left of the allies, were themselves encompassed; for two brigades of the 4th Division turned and smote them from the left, the Portuguese smote them from the right; and while thus scathed on both flanks with fire, they were violently shocked and pushed back with a mighty force by the 6th Division, yet not in flight, but fighting fiercely, and strewing the ground with their enemies' bodies as well as their own."

Two remaining divisions of Clausel's and Reille's now came into action—and while their attack was better combined, it was equally impetuous as that of the division that had been defeated. An ermita on the crest of a detached height on the left of the 4th Division was of great importance to the security of the position; and with a most enduring gallantry, a column of the enemy mounted to the crest, and under a terrible fire, drove back the Caçadore regiment posted round the chapel. Reinforced, however, by General Ross, the Anglo-Portuguese returned furiously to the charge, and the French were bayoneted down the hill. Again they rallied—advanced—and the allies were in turn driven back. Lord Wellington marked the deadly struggle, "brought Byng's brigade forward at a running pace, and sent the 27th and 48th British Regiments belonging to Anson's brigade down from the higher ground in the centre against the crowded masses, rolling them backward in disorder, and throwing them one after the other violently down the mountain side,—and with no child's play. The two British regiments fell upon the enemy three separate times with the bayonet, and lost more than half their own numbers."

To carry the hill on the right of the position was the next object of the enemy; and there two Spanish regiments had been posted, supported by the British 40th. The attack was confident and daring, as with imposing numbers the enemy circled the base of the height, mounted most gallantly, and drove the regiment of El Pravia from the plateau. For a few minutes the 40th stood on that mountain height alone and unsupported; but a Portuguese regiment bravely rushed up to its support, and

formed on that flank which the recession of the Spanish battalion had left uncovered. In fourfold numbers the assailants, in the meantime, were pressing up ; and presently, their column topped the summit. The calm and steady attitude of the 40th, as contrasted with the clamorous advance of the French, might have been mistaken for the sullen devotion of a band that felt itself overmatched, but still scorned to seek its safety ingloriously. But never was silence more deceptive. The tiger's spring is preceded by an ominous tranquillity—the tempest's lull only tells that its fury is about to burst again. Not a murmur passed through the ranks of the British regiment, and yet the leading files of the attacking column rose rapidly over the crest of the sierra, and confronted the defenders. Another minute passed—the head of the column was developed—the enemy were lodged upon the plateau—and then the tempest burst.

The word to advance was given ; and with thrilling hurras, on rushed the 40th with the bayonet. In a moment, the leading sections of the French column were annihilated, the supporting ones torn and disordered by a shattering volley, and the whole driven rudely from the height. In vain they were reformed, and again and again led forward : the cheer, the charge, the volley, smote them on the summit, rent their array to pieces, and sent them down the hill. Four times they were urged on, and as often were they bloodily repulsed. At last, heart and strength failed together ; and they suddenly receded from a position, which the bravery of one glorious regiment had made impregnable.

Such was the termination of a combat, which, for its fierceness and obstinacy, was new to Wellington himself. With Soult, all hope was over ; and, worse still, both the troops, and the general opposed to him, had established an uncontroverted superiority. What was the result of four days' slaughter ? What the condition of his rival ? Wellington had vindicated his position with only 16,000 combatants ; "and now, including the troops still maintaining the blockade, he had 50,000, 20,000 being British, in close military combination. Thirty thousand flushed with recent success were in hand, and Hill's troops were well placed for retaking the offensive."

Despairing of success against the front of a position that had been already so admirably maintained, Soult sent to the rear the whole of his artillery, part of his cavalry, the sick and wounded, and every other incumbrance. This was a preparatory movement for his own retreat ; for his army could not be supported

in a mountain country so distant from its magazines, and where the means of transport were so difficult. That decision was however changed. On the 29th, which passed inactively, D'Erlon announced from Ostiz, that Villatte, with the French reserve, had passed the Bidassoa, from which Graham had retired. Thus reinforced by eighteen thousand men, Soult determined to attempt the allied left, which was in a new position to cover San Sebastian ; Hill's corps having reached Lizasso, and Lord Dalhousie's Marcalain, on the 28th.

For his new operation the French marshal reinforced Comte D'Erlon with a division ; and early on the 30th occupied in force a mountain ridge opposite the 6th and 7th Divisions of the allies ; while from the heights, in front of the 3rd Division, he brought the troops closer to his left.

These movements were penetrated by his opponent, and Lord Wellington determined to dislodge the enemy from the main position, which they held in strength. Picton was accordingly directed to turn its left, by passing the heights recently abandoned by the French marshal, and marching by the road of Roncesvalles ; while Lord Dalhousie should manœuvre against the right by carrying the mountain in front of the 7th Division. "The 4th Division was to assail Foy's position ; but respecting its great strength the attack was to be measured according to the effect produced on the flanks. Meanwhile Byng's brigade and the 6th Division, the latter having a battery of guns and some squadrons of cavalry, were combined to assault Sorauren. La Bispal's Spaniards followed the 6th Division. Fane's horsemen were stationed at Berioplano with a detachment pushed to Irurzun, and the heavy cavalry remained behind Huarte."

If British fighting had been hitherto remarkable for the lion-like ferocity with which it repelled aggression, its vigour of attack and daring intrepidity as strongly distinguished its irresistibility when assailing. Everywhere the advance against the French position was brilliant and successful. General Inglis by a daring effort broke and dispersed with a much inferior force, two regiments on the right of Clausel's division. Dalhousie cleared the mountain in his front. The 6th Division, under Pakenham, turned the French position at Sorauren ; while Byng's brigade carried the village itself by storm. On perceiving the flank attacks succeed, Cole assaulted the front. There, too, the enemy gave way ; and all fell back, followed vigorously by Lord Wellington, until darkness closed the pursuit at Olaque.

That night Soult found himself most critically committed; and it was evident that no chance of extricating a beaten army was left but by falling back on San Estevan, by the pass of Doña Maria, a movement fraught with danger, and most disastrous should it not succeed. A night march was accordingly made—but early on the 31st, the French rearguard was overtaken, and it formed on the summit of the pass. The ground was amazingly strong, and the enemy held it with determination; but the impetuous advance of the 2nd and 7th Divisions could not be checked, and again the beaten army was dislodged. Wellington had pressed on towards Irurita by the pass of Villatte. Byng had already reached Elisondo, and taken a large convoy of ammunition and provisions, with most of the regiment that formed the escort; and Soult's situation was now so critical, that a terrible disaster was likely to close an expedition that had been marked by a succession of defeats,—and accident alone averted it. "He was in a deep narrow valley, and three British divisions with one of Spaniards were behind the mountains overlooking the town; the 7th Division was on the mountain of Doña Maria; the light division, and Sir Thomas Graham's Spaniards, were marching to block the Vera and Echallar exits from the valley; Byng was already at Maya, and Hill was moving by Almandoz, just behind Wellington's own position. A few hours gained, and the French must surrender or disperse. Wellington gave strict orders to prevent the lighting of fires, the straggling of soldiers, or any other indication of the presence of troops; and he placed himself amongst some rocks at a commanding point, from whence he could observe every movement of the enemy. Soult seemed tranquil, and four of his 'gendarmes' were seen to ride up the valley in a careless manner. Some of the staff proposed to cut them off; the English general, whose object was to hide his own presence, would not suffer it; but the next moment three marauding English soldiers entered the valley, and were instantly carried off by the horsemen. Half an hour afterwards the French drums beat to arms, and their columns began to move out of San Estevan towards Sumbilla. Thus the disobedience of three plundering knaves, unworthy of the name of soldiers, deprived one consummate commander of the most splendid success, and saved another from the most terrible disaster."

From a great calamity fortune had delivered him, but Soult's position was still pregnant with danger. The French had

chosen the route leading from the bridge of Yanzi in preference to the road from Sumbilla to Echallar ; and on the latter the light division had been directed to head their retreat, or elsewhere to cut in upon the column ; and Alten, to effect the latter, crossed the Sierra of Santa Cruz, and hurried on to seize the bridge.

The division had already made a distressing march, and to scale a precipitous mountain on a day of intolerable heat, was an attempt almost beyond human perseverance. Famed for its former marches, the light division pressed forward with a courage not to be subdued, and the effort was splendid as distressing. "Many men fell, and died convulsed and frothing at the mouth, while others, whose spirit and strength had never before been quelled, leaned on their muskets, and muttered in sullen tones that they yielded for the first time."

Late in the day, the leading companies reached the crest of a precipice overhanging the narrow road by which Reille's brigades were seen advancing through the defiles ; and as they approached the pass, from the beetling cliff and the underwood below it, the fire of the British riflemen opened with fatal precision, and a scene of suffering and slaughter but rarely witnessed ensued.

"We overlooked," says Captain Cooke, in his narrative, "the enemy at a stone's throw, and from the summit of a tremendous precipice. The river separated us, but the French were wedged in a narrow road, with inaccessible rocks on one side, and the river on the other. Confusion, impossible to describe, followed : the wounded were thrown down in the rush and trampled upon ; the cavalry drew their swords, and endeavoured to charge up the pass of Echallar, but the infantry beat them back, and several, horses and all, were precipitated into the river ; some fired vertically at us, the wounded called out for quarter, while others pointed to them, supported as they were on branches of trees, on which were suspended great-coats clotted with gore, and blood-stained sheets, taken from different habitations to aid the sufferers."

The loss of the retreating division was very heavy, although the greater number effected their escape by the road of Echallar. The bridge, the road, and the ravine, were all heaped with the dead and dying ; many of the latter having, as it was asserted, been thrown into the river, when every hope of carrying them off seemed desperate.

That night the French marshal halted his wearied and dis-

spirited soldiers round Echallar, and early next morning took a position on the Puerto, with the remnant of Clausel's fine divisions, now reduced to barely six thousand men, posted on a connecting hill between him and the town. Lord Wellington, with three divisions, at once determined to attack the latter, and accordingly, the light troops were put in march from Yanzi to turn his right, the 4th moved on Echallar, while the 7th advanced against his left from Sumbilla.

Before either the front or flank attack was made, or even the 4th and light divisions were seen in march, a singular occurrence brought the battle to a close. General Barnes's brigade, alone and unsupported, boldly ascended the mountain, and driving the skirmishers fiercely back, not only continued their advance, but actually forced the French from their position. In war, that exploit remains without a parallel; six thousand veteran soldiers defeated by fifteen hundred men, and in a position so steep and rugged, "that there would have been little to boast of if the numbers had been reversed, and the defence made good."

Clausel rallied on a mountain ridge in rear of Echallar. There was much that might have rendered his position tenable for a time, but in the dusk of evening, a part of the light division won the summit of the hill—the last Frenchman was driven, for the second time, across the frontier—and Spain was free.

For nine days the armies had been in each other's presence, and in severe operations and desperate fighting these days were unexampled. The allied casualties exceeded seven thousand men—and the French, doubling that number by some estimates, and trebling it according to others, might be taken at a mean, and safely set down at fifteen thousand. This was, in a military view, a serious calamity, but in a moral one, it was still greater. The Spaniards had already gained a reputation for efficiency at Vittoria, and in the combats of the Pyrenees it was gallantly sustained. The Portuguese had long since been accounted "worthy to stand side by side with a British regiment," and they vindicated that character most gloriously. With the English, a superiority over every Continental army was established—for assaulting or assailed, they had proved themselves unconquerable. Well might Wellington afterwards declare that "with the army which had crossed the Pyrenees, he could do anything, or go anywhere." Born in different lands, upon the battle-field national distinctions were forgotten, and Britain was the only

country. The old English battalions fought as if their own Black Edward was looking on—the Scottish fully supported their well earned reputation—and that noble corps, "whose stern valour would have graced Thermopylæ," was principally composed of Irishmen. From the same ranks, the cheer, the slogan, and the hurrah, thundered their bold defiance—and like the badges wreathed upon their colours, the spirit of three islands was blended into one. Yes, centuries will pass—but when will such an army, and under such a leader, be embattled?

CHAPTER XX

It is narrated by a military writer that Lord Wellington, on receiving an official notification of his appointment to the colonelcy of the Blues, observed playfully to those about him at the time, "that he was the luckiest fellow in the world, and had been born under some extraordinary planet:" and assuredly the experience of after years verified the remark. Fame and fortune do not always reward desert—but on Wellington they flowed continuously; and while an admiring country munificently testified its gratitude to the greatest warrior it had produced, her favours were enhanced by the proud consciousness in him who received them, that all had been honourably earned.

In many striking points the careers of Napoleon and Wellington exhibited a remarkable similitude. Born in the same year—following the same profession—passing that dangerous ordeal unharmed, in which so many of their contemporaries perished—and both surviving to gain the loftiest objects at which "ambition's self" could strain. Beset with dangers, their preservation seemed miraculous—as both exposed themselves recklessly—and from their most perilous situations, both had singular escapes, and by the most opposite agencies. When at Acre a shell dropped at Napoleon's foot, a soldier seizing him in his arms, flung him on the ground, and the shivered metal passed harmlessly over the prostrate general, and but slightly wounded his preserver. In Paris the furious driving of his coachman cleared the street before the infernal machine could be exploded. These were probably his greatest perils; and from one he was delivered by the devotion of a grenadier—from the other, by the accidental drunkenness of a servant. Nor were Wellington's escapes less remarkable; for there wa

rarely an action in which some of his personal attendants were not killed or wounded. At Vittoria he passed unharmed through the fire of the French centre bristling with cannon, for there eighty pieces were in battery. At Sorauren he wrote a memorandum on the bridge, while the enemy were in actual possession of the village. During the bloody contest that ensued, for a time he sat upon a height within close musket range of the enemy, watching the progress of the battle; and, in the evening, his danger was still more imminent. "He had carried with him," says Colonel Napier, "towards Echallar half a company of the 43rd as an escort, and placed a sergeant named Blood with a party to watch in front while he examined his maps. The French who were close at hand sent a detachment to cut the party off; and such was the nature of the ground that their troops, rushing on at speed, would infallibly have fallen unawares upon Lord Wellington, if Blood, a young, intelligent man, seeing the danger, had not, with surprising activity, leaping, rather than running down, the precipitous rocks he was posted on, given the general notice; and as it was, the French arrived in time to send a volley of shot after him as he galloped away." It was said of Napoleon that he bore a charmed life—and certainly a special providence watched over that of Wellington—"God covered his head in battle, and not a hair of it was scathed."

After his disastrous failure, Soult cantoned his army in positions best fitted for effecting its reorganisation. His left was placed upon the heights of Ainhoa, the centre in front of Sarre, the right wing extended from the Bidassoa to the sea, and the reserve was behind the Nivelle. Foy's division was round St. Jean Pied de Port; and the cavalry spread themselves loosely over those parts of the country where forage was most readily obtained.

To Wellington, victory had opened a new line of operations, and many expected that he would have at once adopted it. To carry the war into France was practicable; and that would have given an additional éclat to his recent successes. Personal considerations, therefore, were not wanting to influence the allied general in deciding on that course of action—and other inducements were held out which might have confirmed a wavering resolution. It was asserted that in the south of France a feeling in favour of the Bourbons prevailed extensively; and a direct overture was made by the Duc de Berri to join the allies with twenty thousand partisans, whom he described

as being already armed and organised, and on whose fidelity every reliance might be placed.

Never, on the part of the allied general, was firmness of purpose more required than at this period of the contest. Enough had been done to excite the most extravagant expectations, and not enough to warrant any deviation from the cautious policy that had hitherto guided Wellington through his varied difficulties, and produced slow, but successful results. The congress of Prague had not yet closed its sittings ; and it was to be dreaded that Napoleon's admirable diplomacy might still effect a separate peace. In that event, 700,000 men would become instantly disposable ; and nothing but an impregnable position could enable Lord Wellington to retain his footing in the Peninsula. With these views, the reduction of the frontier fortresses was of paramount importance—and he resumed the siege of San Sebastian, while the blockade of Pamplona was rigorously maintained.

As San Sebastian had been blockaded during the recent operations, the trenches were found in the same state as that in which they had been left—and therefore the siege was promptly resumed. On August 5th, the battering-train was re-landed ; and the same plan of attack was continued, but with an increased means of offence.

Lord Wellington had previously made repeated charges against the Admiralty, for the negligence and inefficiency in which the maritime department of the war had been conducted—but the arrival of the long-expected supplies, at last enabled Lord Wellington to proceed rapidly with siege operations—and the batteries formerly employed were enlarged, and others constructed and armed. A sortie on the night of the 24th produced some confusion, but it was repelled with the loss of a few prisoners. During the 25th, the greatest activity prevailed—and on the 26th, everything being in readiness "the batteries opened with a general salvo at nine a.m. by signal from No. 11, with fifty-seven pieces of ordnance, viz. fourteen on the right, and fifteen on the isthmus.

The effect of such powerful artillery was speedily apparent. Before nightfall, the revêtement of the demi-bastion to its salient angle was beaten down, and the towers and curtain severely battered.

On the 30th, the sea flank for five hundred feet was laid open, and the fire of the Chofre batteries was turned against the defences of Monte Orgullo. The half bastion of Saint John, and

the high curtain above it, were now in ruins, and the palisades on the face of the hornwork beaten down. Lord Wellington, satisfied with the appearance of the breaches, gave orders for their being assaulted next morning ; the debouches for the troops were prepared, and as the tide would have ebbed sufficiently by eleven o'clock, that hour was named for the storm.

The column of attack was formed of the 2nd Brigade of the 5th Division, commanded by Major-General Robinson, with an immediate support of detachments of volunteers, and having in reserve the remainder of the 5th Division, consisting of Major-General Spry's Portuguese brigade, and the 1st Brigade under Major-General Hay, as also the 5th battalion of Caçadores of General Bradford's brigade, under Major Hill ; the whole under the direction of Lieutenant-General Sir James Leith, commanding the 5th Division.

The morning was wet and gloomy, the devoted city was shrouded in mist, and, for want of light, the thunder of the British batteries was silent. About eight o'clock the fog cleared away—the roar of artillery was heard—and it was continued with unabated violence until the signal was given for the assault, and the storming parties rushed forward to the breaches.

"The column in filing out of the right of the trenches was, as before, exposed to a heavy fire of shells and grape shot, and a mine was exploded in the left angle of the counterscarp of the hornwork, which did great damage, but did not check the ardour of the troops in advancing to the attack. There never was anything so fallacious as the external appearance of the breach ; without some description, its almost insuperable difficulties cannot be estimated. Notwithstanding its great extent, there was but one point where it was possible to enter, and there by single files. All the inside of the wall to the right of the curtain formed a perpendicular scarp of at least twenty feet to the level of the streets ; so that the narrow ridge of the curtain itself, formed by the breaching of its end and front, was the only accessible point. During the suspension of the operations of the siege from want of ammunition, the enemy had prepared every means of defence which art could devise, so that great numbers of men were covered by intrenchments and traverses, in the hornwork, on the ramparts of the curtain, and inside of the town opposite to the breach, and ready to pour a most destructive fire of musketry on both flanks of the approach to the top of the narrow ridge of the curtain.

"Everything that the most determined bravery could attempt was repeatedly tried in vain by the troops, who were brought forward from the trenches in succession. No man outlived the attempt to gain the ridge: and though the slope of the breach afforded shelter from the enemy's musketry, yet still the nature of the stone rubbish prevented the great exertions of the engineers and working parties from being able to form a lodgment for the troops, exposed to the shells and grape from the batteries of the castle, as was particularly directed, in obedience to your Lordship's instructions; and, at all events, a secure lodgment could never have been obtained without occupying a part of the curtain.

"In this almost desperate state of the attack, after consulting with Colonel Dickson, commanding the royal artillery, I ventured to order the guns to be turned against the curtain. A heavy fire of artillery was directed against it; passing a few feet only over the heads of our troops on the breach, and was kept up with a precision of practice beyond all example. Meanwhile I accepted the offer of a part of Major-General Bradford's Portuguese brigade to ford the river near its mouth. The advance of the 1st Battalion, 13th Regiment, under Major Snodgrass, over the open breach, and across the river; and of a detachment of the 24th Regiment, under Lieutenant-Colonel M'Bean, in support, was made in the handsomest style, under a very severe fire of grape. Major Snodgrass attacked, and finally carried the small breach on the right of the great one, and Lieutenant-Colonel M'Bean's detachment occupied the right of the great breach. I ought not to omit to mention, that a similar offer was made by the 1st Portuguese regiment of Brigadier-General Wilson's brigade, under Lieutenant-Colonel Fearon; and that both Major-General Bradford, and Brigadier-General Wilson, had, from the beginning, urged most anxiously the employment of their respective brigades in the attack, as they had had so large a share in the labour and fatigues of the right attack.

"Observing now the effect of the admirable fire of the batteries against the curtain, though the enemy was so much covered, a great effort was ordered to be made to gain the high ridge at all hazards, at the same time that an attempt should be made to storm the hornwork.

"It fell to the lot of the 2nd Brigade of the 5th Division, under the command of Colonel the Hon. Charles Greville, to move out of the trenches for this purpose, and the 3rd Battalion

of the Royal Scots, under Lieutenant-Colonel Barnes, supported by the 38th, under Lieutenant-Colonel Miles, fortunately arrived to assault the breach of the curtain about the time when an explosion on the rampart of the curtain (occasioned by the fire of the artillery) created some confusion among the enemy. The narrow pass was gained, and was maintained, after a severe conflict; and the troops on the right of the breach, having about this time succeeded in forcing the barricades on the top of the narrow line wall, found their way into the houses that joined it. Thus, after an assault which lasted above two hours, under the most trying circumstances, a firm footing was obtained.

"It was impossible to restrain the impetuosity of the troops, and in an hour more the enemy were driven from all the complication of defences prepared in the streets, suffering a severe loss in their retreat to the castle, and leaving the whole town in our possession."

San Sebastian was won. Would that its horrors had ended with its storm! but the scenes that followed were terrible. The sky became suddenly overcast—thunder was heard above the din of battle—and mortal fury mingled with an elemental uproar. Darkness came on; but houses wrapped in flames, directed the licentious soldiery to plunder, and acts of violence still more horrible. The storms of Badajoz and Rodrigo were followed by the most revolting excesses; yet they fell infinitely short of those committed after San Sebastian was carried by assault. "Some order was at first maintained, but the resolution of the troops to throw off discipline was quickly made manifest. A British staff-officer was pursued with a volley of small arms, and escaped with difficulty from men who mistook him for the provost-martial of the 5th Division; a Portuguese adjutant, who endeavoured to prevent some atrocity, was put to death in the market-place, not with sudden violence from a single ruffian, but deliberately by a number of English soldiers. Many officers exerted themselves to preserve order, many men were well-conducted, but the rapine and violence commenced by villains soon spread, the camp-followers crowded into the place, and the disorder continued, until the flames following the steps of the plunderer put an end to his ferocity by destroying the whole town."

The loss sustained by the victors in the storm of San Sebastian exceeded two thousand men; and had the mines been properly exploded, it would no doubt have doubled that amount. The

garrison, at the moment of assault, mustered two thousand effective bayonets, of whom many were killed and wounded, and hundreds made prisoners, who could not gain the castle after the town had fallen.

To a brave enemy the historian is bound to bear an honest testimony; and in Rey's defence of San Sebastian there was much to command an unqualified approbation. One circumstance, however, sullied the glory of its siege. The allied prisoners were obliged to labour under the fire of their own artillery; and afterwards, they were penned up in a contracted space within the castle, and exposed, without *blindages*, to the effect of a heavy and sustained bombardment. Even in the last terrible cannonade, these unfortunates were open to its fury—and hence the British batteries poured an indiscriminate destruction upon all—friends and foes.

The delay and loss of life in the reduction of San Sebastian have been attributed to different causes. By some, the first assault was considered wanting in force and determination; and it has been contended, that boldness and perseverance must have succeeded, as they had done before at Badajoz and Rodrigo. But this is a speculative question which never can be settled. The truth more probably is, that the tedious and disastrous progress of the attack arose from the abandonment of scientific principle in conducting it. Hence the event was not only dangerously procrastinated, but after an enormous expenditure of means and blood, success, even to the last moment, was insecure, and then it was achieved by an enduring gallantry that in no other troops would have been looked for.

While actively engaged in controverting the designs of the French marshals, and preparing to take the offensive himself, the allied commander was annoyed in every quarter by the villainous intrigues of the Spanish Government, and exposed to the malignant slanders of a press whose licentiousness it secretly encouraged. In violation of its engagements to Lord Wellington, and false to the promises which had induced him to accept the command of the Spanish armies, the Regency seized every opportunity to evince its personal hostility, and, as he complained, refused him the courtesy due even to a private gentleman. "His recommendations for promotion after Vittoria were disregarded, orders were sent direct to the subordinate generals, and changes were made in the commands and in the destinations of the troops without his concurrence, and without passing through him as generalissimo. The clergy

were at open warfare with the Government; many generals were dissatisfied, and menacing in their communications with the superior civil authorities; the soldiers were starving; and the people, tired of their miseries, only desired to get rid of the invaders, and to avoid the burden of supplying the troops of either side. The English Cabinet, after having gorged Spain with gold and flattery, was totally without influence."

At no period of the war had Lord Wellington escaped annoyance from the press. Success or disaster brought no respite from its attacks. If a failure occurred, at home it was represented by the Opposition newspapers as a national calamity equally fatal and irremediable; and even victory was turned to mischievous account, for, by exciting expectations which no human means could realise, the periodical writers of the day laid the sure foundation for popular disappointment. In one of his letters, Lord Wellington alluded to these newspaper absurdities with much humour.

"If I had been at any time capable of doing what these gentlemen expected, I should now, I believe, have been in the moon.

"They have long ago expected me at Bordeaux; nay, I understand that there are many of their wise readers (amateurs of the military art) who are waiting to join the army till headquarters shall arrive in that city; and when they shall hear of the late Spanish battle, I conclude that they will defer their voyage till I shall arrive at Paris. But you may depend upon this, first, that I shall neither myself form, nor encourage in others, extravagant expectations."

While the Spanish Government and press, instead of supporting their victorious ally, returned his good services with obloquy and falsehood, Lord Wellington had made every preparation for assuming the offensive, and waited only for the fall of Pamplona immediately to resume hostilities. He knew that it was impossible that the fortress could hold out, and once in his possession, the base of his intended operations would be secure. The blockade was therefore rigorously maintained, and the desperate sallies of men suffering from famine and disease, but still determined to hold out, were rendered unavailing.

The sterility of the line of country beyond the Bidassoa, and the uncertainty of obtaining supplies by sea, whose debarkation must be effected on an iron-bound coast, unprovided with harbours, and open to the prevailing winds, made Lord

Wellington hesitate in advancing into France. Had he acted entirely upon his military judgment, Catalonia would have been chosen for the theatre of his first operations after Pamplona should have been reduced. But other considerations decided him upon taking a position within the French territory. In England it was expected as a consequence of his success—on the Continent it was ardently desired as the means of effecting a powerful diversion ; and having maturely weighed the question, Lord Wellington acted on political rather than military considerations.

"The French position was the base of a triangle, of which Bayonne was the apex, and the great roads leading from thence to Irun and St. Jean Pied de Port, were the sides. A rugged mass of mountains intervened between the left and centre, but nearly all the valleys and communications, coming from Spain beyond the Nive, centred at St. Jean Pied de Port, and were embraced by an entrenched camp which Foy occupied in front of that fortress."

Soult had laboured vigorously to strengthen every portion of the position that nature had left unprotected, and Wellington was anxious to deforce his opponent, before these defences were completed. This, however, was not practicable until the fords of the Bidassoa had been sounded, and the state of the tides ascertained. On October 6th all preparations were ready for the attempt, and while the requisite movements for the attack were effected with admirable skill, their true design had been so ably concealed that though the French marshal was kept in constant alarm, the plans of his opponent remained impenetrable.

During the annals of the war many daring operations had been conceived and executed, but among the boldest the passage of the Bidassoa will be ranked. The plan was to carry the greater La Rhune with its dependent ridges, cross the river by its lower fords, and place the left wing of the allies within France. Lord Wellington, by forcing this passage, would be enabled to establish himself in a position to menace the French centre, and obtain possession of the Irun road, as well as the harbour of Fuenterabia ; and thus he would shorten his communications, and open another port by which he might receive supplies from England. Such were the objects of his attempt, and nothing could be more brilliant than its execution.

By the assistance of Spanish fishermen, Lord Wellington ascertained that below the bridge the river could be forded at low water, and that, too, at three different points. These sands

were broad—the tide rose sixteen feet—the whole left bank of the Bidassoa was overlooked by the enemy's position—and therefore the difficulty of collecting troops close to the river unobserved, was manifest. Success depended on the rapid execution of the attack; "and a check would have been tantamount to a terrible defeat, because in two hours the returning tide would come with a swallowing flood upon the rear."

The daring of the design—the hazard attendant on the slightest failure—"the unlikelihood that a commander, having a better line of operations, would pass such a river as the Bidassoa at its mouth, deceived the French general. Meanwhile his lieutenants were negligent. Of Reille's two divisions, La Martinière's, now commanded by General Boyer, was at the camp of Urogne, and on the morning of the 7th was dispersed as usual to labour at the works; Villatte's reserve was at Ascain and Serres; the five thousand men composing Maucune's division were indeed on the first line, but unexpectant of an attack; and though the works on the Mandale were finished, and those at Biriatu in a forward state, from the latter to the sea they were scarcely commenced."

While Wellington's combinations were sufficiently marked to excite suspicion, they were so admirably confused with false movements that Soult was completely misled. As if fortune had determined to smile upon the bold attempt, at nightfall a storm was seen collecting on the Haya, the Alpine height which overlooked the low grounds where the columns for the assault were to be collected. Thunder rolled, and drowned with its louder peals the noise of bringing artillery into position; and at daylight it burst with all its fury upon the right bank of the river, and the columns remained undiscovered. From the contiguity of the opposite bank, the French pickets were occasionally overheard; and although an enemy, in imposing force, was immediately in their front, their presence was unknown, and their object unsuspected.

Nothing could be more perfect than Lord Wellington's dispositions. The tents were standing, and every camp seemed quiet. At last the hour arrived when the tide had fallen sufficiently, and two heavy columns issued simultaneously from their concealment—one taking the ford pointing towards the heights of Andaya, and the other moving in rapid march directly against the French position at Sans Culottes. The astonishment of the enemy was great. The columns in safety

had crossed the centre of the river; then rose a rocket from the steeple of Fuenterabia, and the thunder of the guns already in position on San Marcial answered the preconcerted signal. Another column advanced by the ford of Jonco; others crossed by the upper ones; and from the mountain ridges, the grand movement of attack by seven distinct points was visible; the troops above the bridge "plunging at once into the fiery contest, and those below it appearing in the distance like huge sullen snakes winding over the heavy sands."

The combats which followed prove that to determined valour no difficulties are insurmountable. Nature had provided her strongest means of defence; everywhere rocks, and torrents, and ravines, barred the progress of the assailants; and if an easier surface occasionally presented itself, art had been skilfully employed to render that impracticable. Nothing, however, could stay the victorious rushes of the allies; and partial checks seemed only to act as stimulants to more desperate exertions. The success with which the allied divisions had held their own mountain posts against the troops who now confronted them, told them what desperate resistance might be expected in assaulting veteran soldiers, established on alpine heights, and fighting on their native soil. "Day after day, for more than a month, entrenchment had risen over entrenchment, covering the vast slopes of mountains which were scarcely accessible from their natural steepness and asperity. This they could see, yet cared neither for the growing strength of the works, the height of the mountains, nor the breadth of the river with its heavy sands, and its mighty rushing tide; all were despised, and while they marched with this confident valour, it was observed that the French fought in defence of their dizzy steeps with far less fierceness than when, striving against insurmountable obstacles, they attempted to storm the lofty rocks of Sorauren. Continual defeat had lowered their spirit, but the feebleness of the defence on this occasion may be traced to another cause. It was a general's, not a soldier's battle. Wellington had with overmastering combinations overwhelmed each point of attack. Taupin's and Maucune's divisions were each less than five thousand strong; and they were separately assailed, the first by eighteen, the second by fifteen thousand men; and at neither point were Reille and Clausel able to bring their reserves into action before the positions were won."

Never had the allied troops fought better. They had im-

mense difficulties to overcome ; but the combinations of their general were masterly, and the subordinate officers led their battalions to each assault with that brave determination which inspires soldiers with a confidence that nothing can bar their success. Many displays of heroism were exhibited ; and there was one of ready boldness, which gained the good fortune it deserved. The French garrison had abandoned a strong field-work which covered the right of the Bayonette ridge, and were observed by Colonel Colborne hurrying off in evident confusion. He galloped forward, attended by his own staff and a handful of the 95th, intercepted them in their retreat, and desired them to surrender. Believing that the colonel was in advance of a force too strong to be resisted, the order was instantly obeyed, and three hundred men threw down their arms, and were made prisoners by a body not exceeding twenty. Officers of every rank and age showed to their followers an example of dauntless intrepidity. During these arduous days the checks were few, and always overcome ; and when a foreign brigade wavered for an instant, the road to victory was shown it by a beardless boy.

The misconduct of a few, on this occasion, sullied the brilliancy of conquest ; and the same predatory spirit which had occasioned such fearful atrocities when San Sebastian was carried by assault, led to many excesses while these splendid operations were in progress. This breach of discipline brought, as it often did, a summary punishment on the offenders ; for many were found by the French in a state of stupid drunkenness, and captivity paid the penalty of crime.

For several days both armies remained inactive. Soult was preparing for an attack ; and Wellington completing his preparations for resuming the offensive, so soon as the fall of Pamplona would authorise it.

The event so long expected occurred, and a despatch from Carlos d'Espana announced the surrender of Pamplona. For four months that fortress had been resolutely defended ; and although the sound of Soult's artillery had been heard by the garrison he had been so anxious to relieve, the diversion was utterly unavailing. Maucune's sorties were boldly made and boldly repelled ; and at the cost of above an hundred men, a trifling quantity of corn was with difficulty obtained. In October, the garrison were put upon an allowance of four ounces of horseflesh each man. In a week that too failed ; every domestic animal had been consumed ; rats were eagerly sought

for, and weeds supplied the place of vegetables. A feeble sally was made upon the 10th, but it was repulsed with a loss of eighty men. Disease generally accompanies famine—scurvy broke out—a thousand men were reported to be in the hospital, as many were wounded, and death and desertion had lessened the garrison by six hundred. In these desperate circumstances, Cassan, the governor, sent out to offer a surrender, provided he was allowed to retire into France with six pieces of artillery. A peremptory rejection of this condition was followed by a proposition that the soldiers should not serve for a year. This, too, being refused, it was intimated to the Spanish general, that after blowing up the works, Cassan would imitate Brennier, and trust to fortune and gallantry for the deliverance of his exhausted garrison. This proceeding on the part of the French governor was so repugnant to the rules of war, that a letter was conveyed to his advanced post, denouncing the attempt as inhuman, involving in a desperate experiment the destruction of unfortunate beings who had already borne the horrors of a siege, with an assurance that should it be attempted, the governor and officers would be shot, and the private soldiers decimated. Most probably the threat of mining the city had been merely used to obtain more favourable terms and neither the abominable experiment was made, nor the terrible retaliation which would have followed was required. On the 31st the garrison surrendered, and the finest fortress on the Peninsula became thus a bloodless conquest.

Winter rapidly came on; and to remain upon those alpine heights, indifferently sheltered, and more insecurely supplied, was almost impossible. Already the hardships of the season were painfully experienced; and men and horses at times were threatened with actual starvation. Communications between distant posts, difficult in good weather, were now almost impracticable; and bivouacs, in summer agreeable enough, became every day more dreary and uncomfortable. To hold his present positions through the winter months was hardly practicable; and yet there were many circumstances which made a farther advance into the enemy's territory a very critical experiment; and Lord Wellington accordingly hesitated to take that step. Should Napoleon, either by success or negotiation, induce the allied sovereigns to agree to such terms as would end hostilities in Germany, it would be impossible for the allies to maintain themselves in France; and to recross the Pyrenees in the depth of winter would be a most difficult, and probably

disastrous operation. The news from Germany, however, confirmed the previous rumours which had already reached the south of France—the tide of fortune had turned, and Talleyrand's fatal prophecy was being fulfilled.

Soult, in the meantime, had established his head-quarters at St. Jean de Luz, having placed his army in an entrenched position, extending from the sea to St. Jean Pied de Port. Wellington's *corps d'armée* were thus distributed. The 1st and 5th Divisions, Aylmer's brigade, Bradford's and Wilson's Portuguese, and Giron's Spanish division, were encamped in France, around the greater La Rhune. The light and 4th Divisions were posted on the heights of Vera. The army of Andalusia, with the 7th Division on their right, occupied positions near Echallar. The 3rd Division was between Echallar and Maya. The 6th was posted at the latter place, with Hamilton's Portuguese in reserve, at Ariscoon. One brigade of the 2nd Division was at Alduides, and another, with Morillo's Spanish corps, occupied Roncesvalles. In the rear, the cavalry were quartered in the valley of the Bastan; and Lord Wellington's head-quarters had been removed from Lesaca to Vera.

The severity of the weather obliged the allied general to suspend an attack, originally designed to have been made on October 29th upon the enemy's fortified positions; and Soult, already apprised of the intention, employed the interval until November 10th, in strengthening his camp by additional field works and abatis. On the 6th and 7th the weather cleared; and the 8th was named for the attack; but, as usual, the Spanish divisions were unprepared—their commissariat had failed—and Lord Wellington was obliged to spare from his own stores forty thousand rations of flour. On the 9th, heavy rains rendered the roads impassable; but on the 10th a beautiful morning opened on a glorious day, and "ninety thousand combatants of all arms and ranks, above seventy-four thousand being Anglo-Portuguese, descended to the battle, and with them went ninety-five pieces of artillery, which under the command of Colonel Dickson were all with inconceivable vigour and activity thrown into action."

Never were Lord Wellington's dispositions more fortunate in conception and effect. Before daybreak columns were within pistol-shot of the works they were to assault, and the enemy were ignorant that any force was in their front more formidable than the ordinary pickets. The darkness gradually gave place to morning. Three guns pealed from the mountain heights of

Achubia ; and before their smoke had cleared away, the columns of attack issued from their concealment,—and the battles of the Nivelle commenced.

With that clearness which always marked Lord Wellington's official communications, he thus detailed to Earl Bathurst, the progress and termination of one of his most distinguished battles, —if the continued fighting of five days may thus be termed.

" The attack began at daylight ; and Lieutenant-General Sir Lowry Cole having obliged the enemy to evacuate the redoubt on their right in front of Sarre by a cannonade, and that in front of the left of the village having been likewise evacuated on the approach of the 7th Division under General Le Cor to attack it, Lieutenant-General Sir Lowry Cole attacked and possessed himself of the village, which was turned on its left by the 3rd Division, under Major-General the Hon. C. Colville ; and on its right, by the reserve of Andalusia under Don P. A. Giron ; and Major General C. Baron Alten carried the positions on La Petite Rhune. The whole then co-operated in the attack of the enemy's main position behind the village. The 3rd and 7th Divisions immediately carried the redoubts on the left of the enemy's centre, and the light division those on the right, while the 4th Division with the reserve of Andalusia on their left, attacked their positions in their centre. By these attacks the enemy were obliged to abandon their strong positions which they had fortified with much care and labour ; and they left in the principal redoubt on the height the 1st Battalion 88th Regiment, which immediately surrendered.

" While these operations were going on in the centre, I had the pleasure of seeing the 6th Division, under Lieutenant-General Sir H. Clinton, after having crossed the Nivelle, and having driven in the enemy's pickets on both banks, and having covered the passage of the Portuguese division under Lieutenant-General Sir John Hamilton on its right, make a most handsome attack upon the right of the enemy's position behind Ainhoüé and on the right of the Nivelle, and carry all the entrenchments, and the redoubt on that flank. Lieutenant-General Sir John Hamilton supported, with the Portuguese division, the 6th Division on its right ; and both co-operated in the attack of the second redoubt, which was immediately carried.

" Major-General Pringle's brigade of the 2nd Division, under the command of Lieutenant-General Sir W. Stewart, drove in the enemy's pickets on the Nivelle and in front of Ainhoüé, and Major-General Byng s brigade of the 2nd Division carried the

entrenchments and a redoubt farther on the enemy's left : in which attack, the major-general and these troops distinguished themselves. Major-General Morillo covered the advance of the whole to the heights behind Ainhoüé, by attacking the enemy's posts on the slopes of Mondarrain, and following them towards Itsassu. The troops on the heights behind Ainhoüé were, by these operations under the direction of Lieutenant-General Sir Rowland Hill, forced to retire towards the bridge of Cambo, on the Nive, with the exception of the division on Mondarrain, which, by the march of a part of the 2nd Division, under Lieutenant-General Sir William Stewart, was pushed into the mountains towards Baygorry.

"As soon as the heights were carried on both banks of the Nivelle, I directed the 3rd and 7th Divisions, being the right of our centre, to move by the left of that river upon St. Pé, and the 6th Division by the right of the river on the same place, while the 4th and light divisions, and General Giron's reserve, held the heights above Ascain, and covered this movement on that side, and Lieutenant-General Sir Rowland Hill covered it on the other. A part of the enemy's troops had retired from their centre, and had crossed the Nivelle at St. Pé ; and as soon as the 6th Division approached, the 3rd Division, under Major-General the Hon. C. Colville, and the 7th Division, under General Le Cor, crossed that river, attacking, immediately gained possession of the heights beyond it. We were thus established in the rear of the enemy's right ; but so much of the day was now spent, that it was impossible to make any further movement ; and I was obliged to defer our further operations till the following morning.

"The enemy evacuated Ascain in the afternoon, of which village Lieutenant-General Don Manuel Freyre took possession, and quitted all their works and positions in front of St. Jean de Luz during the night, and retired upon Bidart, destroying all the bridges on the lower Nivelle. Lieutenant-General Sir John Hope followed them with the left of the army as soon as he could cross the river ; and Marshal Sir W. Beresford moved the centre of the army as far as the state of the roads, after a violent fall of rain, would allow ; and the enemy retired again on the night of the 11th into an entrenched camp in front of Bayonne.

"In the course of the operations of which I have given your lordship an outline, in which we have driven the enemy from positions which they had been fortifying with great labour and care for three months, in which we have taken fifty-one

pieces of cannon and six tumbrils of ammunition, and one thousand four hundred prisoners, I have great satisfaction in reporting the good conduct of all the officers and troops. The report itself will show how much reason I had to be satisfied with the conduct of Marshal Sir W. Beresford, and of Lieutenant-General Sir Rowland Hill, who directed the attack of the centre and right of the army; and with that of Lieutenant-Generals Sir Lowry Cole, Sir William Stewart, Sir John Hamilton, and Sir Henry Clinton; Major-Generals the Hon. C. Coville and Charles Baron Alten; Mariscal de Campo F. Le Cor, and Mariscal de Campo Don P. Morillo, commanding divisions of infantry; and with that of Don P. A. Giron, commanding the reserve of Andalusia.

"Lieutenant-General Sir Rowland Hill, and Marshal Sir W. Beresford, and these general officers, have reported their sense of the conduct of the generals and troops under their command respectively; and I particularly request your lordship's attention to the conduct of Major-General Byng, and of Major-General Lambert, who conducted the attack of the 6th Division. I likewise particularly observed the gallant conduct of the 51st and 68th Regiments, under the command of Major Rice and Lieutenant-Colonel Hawkins, in Major-General Inglis's brigade, in the attack of the heights above St. Pé, in the afternoon of the 30th. The 8th Portuguese brigade in the 3rd Division, under Major-General Power, likewise distinguished themselves in the attack of the left of the enemy's centre; and Major-General Anson's brigade of the 4th Division, in the village of Sarre and the centre of the heights.

"Although the most brilliant part of this service did not fall to the lot of Lieutenant-General Sir John Hope and Lieutenant-General Don Manuel Freyre, I had every reason to be satisfied with the mode in which these general officers conducted the service of which they had the direction.

"Our loss, although severe, has not been so great as might have been expected, considering the strength of the positions attacked, and the length of time, from daylight in the morning till night, during which the troops were engaged; but I am concerned to add that Colonel Barnard, of the 95th, has been severely, though I hope not dangerously wounded; and that we have lost in Lieutenant-Colonel Lloyd, of the 94th, an officer who had frequently distinguished himself, and was of great promise.

"I received the greatest assistance in forming the plan for

this attack, and throughout the operations, from the quarter-master-general, Sir George Murray, and the adjutant-general, the Hon. Sir E. Pakenham ; and from Lieutenant-Colonels Lord Fitzroy Somerset and Campbell, and all the officers of my personal staff, and His Serene Highness the Prince of Orange.

"The artillery which was in the field was of great use to us ; and I cannot sufficiently acknowledge the intelligence and activity with which it was brought to the point of attack under the directions of Colonel Dickson, over the bad roads through the mountains in this season of the year.

"I send this despatch by my aide-de-camp, Lieutenant the Marquis of Worcester, whom I beg leave to recommend to your lordship."

CHAPTER XXI

Covered by the night, the Duke of Dalmatia fell back to a position in front of Bidart ; and the French division at Ascain retired also, abandoning that place to the Spaniards, who immediately occupied it with Longa's corps. The allied pursuit commenced early next day ; but Sir John Hope was delayed by heavy rains and broken bridges, while the dreadful state of the roads completely impeded Marshal Beresford's advance, who had pushed forward after Soult from St. Pé with a wing from the centre of the allies.

Soult's escape in the recent conflict from far greater losses than he had sustained, was entirely owing to the badness of the roads, which had rendered rapid movements on the allied part, impossible. Had Lord Wellington been enabled to push his successful operations with his customary rapidity, the French right wing must have been compromised, and it would have been either taken or cut to pieces. Nor, with this fortunate deliverance from a great calamity, was Soult's danger at an end. The entrenched camp at Bayonne was unfinished ; and at Cambo, the bridge-head on the left was ill constructed, and on the right it was scarcely traced out. Hence, though he reinforced Foy with D'Erlon's division, the Nive would have proved a feeble barrier, and Wellington, with an army in high condition and flushed with recent victories, would have borne down any opposition which dispirited soldiers and an inferior force could have offered him. But the country and the weather favoured the regressive movements of the French marshal ; the

two great roads were still commanded by the French, and the by-roads were so terribly cut up that the cavalry were knee-deep, and no exertions could get artillery forward. On the 11th the rain came down in torrents ; and the morning of the 12th was foggy—the advance of the allies was, consequently, interrupted ; and the beaten army had thus ample time allowed them to take positions on the Nive, and occupy the camp at Bayonne.

While Lord Wellington's intended advance was thus most provokingly arrested, he had the mortification to find that the same licentious spirit which had so frequently led to robbery and outrage, showed itself again in the Anglo-Portuguese brigades, while Freyre's and Longa's troops had perpetrated the most outrageous crimes ; for on entering Ascain they plundered the place and murdered several of the inhabitants. The insubordination of the Spaniards was most alarming. On the right, Mina's corps was reported to be in a state of mutiny, ravaging the country as they went along, and perpetrating every enormity. Nor was there any hope that these disorders would be repressed ; for the civil and military authorities took no trouble to bring the worst offenders to justice, but permitting murder and robbery to pass unpunished they sought every opportunity to display a deadly hatred towards the nation that had delivered them.

Nothing but determination like Lord Wellington's could have repressed these disorders, and averted the fatal consequences which would have otherwise resulted. The adjutant-general executed two British soldiers, affixing to their breasts a paper, on which their offendings were detailed ; and the allied commander, with fearless severity, hanged every Spanish marauder who could be taken in the act. Nor did he stop there ;—Mina's mutineers were disarmed—the Andalusian army sent back to the valley of the Bastan—the Galicians cantoned between Irun and Hernani—and Longa's, by far the worst, were sent into the interior of Spain. Such decisive proceedings had their due effect. "However, the loss of such a mass of troops, and the effects of weather on the roads, reduced the army for the moment to a state of inactivity ; the head-quarters were suddenly fixed at St. Jean de Luz, and the troops were established in permanent cantonments."

Lord Wellington had felt considerable inconvenience from the narrow space afforded for the occupation of his army, as a surface far more extended than that which he possessed was requisite for the subsistence of nearly nine thousand horse-

men and one hundred pieces of artillery; and he had consequently determined to force the passage of the Nive, although to establish an army on both sides of a navigable river, whose communications were at all times bad, and occasionally totally interrupted by winter floods, with an enemy in front possessing excellent roads and well-fortified positions, was certainly a daring resolution. From the 11th to the 20th, incessant rains prevented the intended movements; but Hill's threatening advance on the 16th, having alarmed the enemy and caused them to destroy the bridge of Cambo, Lord Wellington brought forward his left wing to those heights between Bidart and Biarritz, which cross the Bayonne road in front of the Château de Barouillet. Half a league to the right, the plateau and village of Arcanges were occupied by the light division—and farther on, the 6th Division were posted at Avrauntz, with their right upon the river. The remaining divisions were placed *en potence* on the left of the Nive, and occupied Ustaritz and Cambo.

During the short term of inaction which the inclemency of the weather had occasioned, one of those periods of conventional civility, which not unfrequently occurred during the Peninsular campaigns, took place between the French and allied outposts. "A disposition," says Quartermaster Surtees, "had for some time been gaining ground with both armies, to mitigate the miseries of warfare, as much as was consistent with each doing their duty to their country; and it had by this time proceeded to such an extent, as to allow us to place that confidence in them that they would not molest us even if we passed their outposts."

Lord Wellington, however, discountenanced those friendly relations, where the arrangements were so perfectly amicable, that the parties not only took charge of love-letters, but even "plundered in perfect harmony."

"Before this order was issued, the most unbounded confidence subsisted between us, and which it was a pity to put a stop to, except for such weighty reasons. They used to get us such things as we wanted from Bayonne, particularly brandy, which was cheap and plentiful; and we in return gave them occasionally a little tea, of which some of them had learnt to be fond. Some of them also, who had been prisoners of war in England, sent letters through our army-post to their sweethearts in England, our people receiving the letters and forwarding them."

Never had Lord Wellington more cause to eulogise the match-

less bravery of his troops, nor better reason to bear an honourable testimony to the merits of his lieutenants. Throughout these protracted combats, Sir John Hope not only exhibited the prompt resources which meet every contingency incident to a battle ; but when an unexpected pressure required additional exertion to encourage troops, few in number and unsupported for a time, to maintain their ground against an overwhelming force that threatened them, the British general was foremost in the fight, and the marvel was how one, whose person was so distinguished and exposed, could have survived that sanguinary contest. Sir John Hope was slightly wounded in the leg and shoulder, had two horses disabled, his clothes were cut with bullets, and his hat four times struck. No wonder that Lord Wellington, when alluding in one of his letters to the ability of his favourite general, added—"but we must lose him ; he exposes himself so terribly."

Had Sir Rowland Hill been still a nameless soldier, the battle of the 13th would have established him at once as an officer of high pretensions. On the heights of St. Pierre, he found himself, with 13,600 men, and fourteen pieces of artillery ; in his front assailed by seven infantry divisions, mustering 35,000 bayonets ; in his rear, threatened by the corps of General Paris and the cavalry under Pierre Soult. Never did a general abide a battle against greater odds, and achieve a bolder victory !

The thickness of the morning favoured Soult's order of attack, and his dispositions were consequently unobserved. Three infantry divisions, the cavalry of Sparre, and twenty pieces of artillery, marched against Hill's position ; Foy's and Maransin's corps succeeded as a support ; and a powerful reserve was in the rear. "The mist hung heavily ; and the French masses, at one moment quite shrouded in vapour, at another dimly seen, or looming sudden and large and dark at different points, appeared like thunder-clouds gathering before the storm. At half-past eight Soult pushed back the British pickets in the centre, the sun burst out at that moment, the sparkling fire of the light troops spread wide in the valley, and crept up the hills on either flank, while the bellowing of forty pieces of artillery shook the banks of the Nive and the Adour. Darricau, marching on the French right, was directed against General Pringle. D'Armagnac, moving on their left and taking Old Mogguerre as the point of direction, was ordered to force Byng's right. Abbé assailed the centre at St. Pierre, where General Stewart commanded ; for Sir Rowland Hill had taken his station on a commanding mount in the rear,

from whence he could see the whole battle and direct the movements."

Ashworth's Portuguese brigade bore the brunt of the opening attack ; and although the 71st, with two guns, and afterwards the 50th, were sent to their support, the whole were driven back, and the rest of the position won.

Under the brow of the height the 92nd were formed. Instantly General Barnes led them forward, scattered the light troops who would have checked him, and charged and repulsed the column. But the French guns opened—their horse artillery commenced a close fire—a second column came forward with imposing steadiness—and the 92nd fell back, and re-formed behind the high ground.

Happily, a thick hedge covered the front of the Portuguese, and the wood upon the right was occupied by some companies of their Caçadores with a wing of the 50th, who held it against every effort of the enemy. The French had already put their grand column in march ; and, when the occurrence might have been fatal, two British colonels compromised the safety of their posts, and withdrew their regiments out of fire !

Hill observed that Foy's and Maransin's divisions, after clearing the deep roads which had impeded them, were about to come to the assistance of Abbé, and therefore the battle must be won or lost upon a cast. He quitted the height where he had been posted ; halted the Buffs—sent them again into action—and led back the 71st himself. Promptly employing his reserve, he directed one brigade of Le Cor's against D'Armagnac's, and led the other in person against Abbé. In the meantime, the wood was bravely held, and the 92nd again formed behind the village of St. Pierre, and again came on to dare a combat with a column in numbers five times its superior. But, strange to say, the challenge was declined. A mounted officer who headed the enemy, waved his sword, and turned the French about ; there was no pursuit ; and the column retired across the valley, and resumed the position from which it had originally advanced.

It was noon—the assault upon the allied position had failed on every point—Pringle had driven back Soult's right wing—Buchan had repulsed the left ; but still there were sufficient troops disposable to have enabled Soult to have massed them in a column, sufficiently strong to force the allied centre. Hill, consequently, reinforced it with the 57th—the 6th Division, which had been despatched by Lord Wellington to his assistance, now topped the height behind—the 4th Division, with Lord

Wellington in person, presently appeared—part of the 3rd Division succeeded, and the 7th were coming on in rapid march. But the crisis of the day had passed; and the fresh divisions arrived upon the ground only to witness the glory of their brave companions. Buchan was driving D'Armagnac's division from the ridge which it had previously carried—Byng clearing another rising ground of the enemy—the high road was vigorously attacked by the centre—and the French were everywhere deforced, and two pieces of artillery captured.

Immediately Lord Wellington, after congratulating Sir Rowland upon his success, ordered a general advance; and until night closed the retiring columns were vigorously pursued and sustained a heavy loss. Darkness, and very difficult ground, lessened casualties which must have been otherwise enormous; and Soult, after taking Foy's division across the Adour, sent two to Marsac, and left Count Drouet's in front of Mousseroles.

The action of St. Pierre lasted but a few hours; and on a space not exceeding a square mile, five thousand men were lying killed and wounded. When Lord Wellington rode up one rapid glance across the battle-ground told how furiously the attack had been made, and with what stern bravery it had been repelled on every point; and seizing his lieutenant's hand, he exclaimed, while his eyes sparkled with delight, "My dear Hill, the day's your own!" Never was a compliment more happily paid to skill and courage. It was delivered upon a field heaped with the corpses of the beaten enemy—the columns of attack were seen receding from a last effort, as vainly made, and as bloodily repulsed, as those desperate trials with which Soult throughout the day had hoped to shake the enduring valour of the allies—and, prouder honour! it issued from the lips of him on whose breath the fate of battles hung, and whose footsteps victory had attended.

It will be recollected that, owing to insubordination on the part of the Spanish troops, they had been sent back to the frontier by Lord Wellington, who thus preferred sacrificing the services of five and twenty thousand efficient soldiers at a moment when all the strength he could collect was requisite, rather than command a body of men whose conduct was insubordinate, and whose presence carried terror where they went. During the progress of the recent operations, the allied general found it necessary to add to his numbers, and bring forward these refractory troops; and accordingly the Galician army were advanced to St. Jean de Luz, and Giron's corps

marched from the valley of the Bastan ; the former to support Sir John Hope—and the latter to cover Hill's corps from the infantry of General Paris and the light cavalry under Pierre Soult.

It might have been expected that the displeasure evinced by the commander-in-chief in sending the Spanish armies so disgracefully to the rear at the moment when active operations were recommencing, would have proved that he was inflexibly determined to crush that spirit of plunder and revenge, which had displayed itself in acts of robbery and bloodshed, and gone far to have roused into hostility a population otherwise indifferent to passing events. But this hope was miserably disappointed. On the 9th, when Paris retired to Hellette, and Morillo advanced by Itrassu, in the first village the Spaniards entered fifteen peasants were murdered, of whom several were women and children.

In the middle of December, fresh proofs were given how little these licentious soldiers could be trusted, and how insensible they had been to the strong measures with which Lord Wellington had visited their former misconduct. Freyer's corps had been placed in reserve at St. Pé, while Morillo's, supported by Giron's, watched the valley of the Nive. Having obtained the assistance of two squadrons of the 18th Hussars, Morillo made a marauding excursion towards Mendionde, attacked the enemy's pickets and provoked a general skirmish : and when he had compromised the English cavalry, suddenly withdrew his infantry, and left the English cavalry to their fate. By desperate fighting, the deserted squadrons with great difficulty escaped from being taken—but several of their officers, and a large proportion of the men, were killed and wounded on the occasion.

Mina at the same time entered the Vals de Baygorry and des Osses, his troops committing shocking outrages, burning and plundering as they went along, and murdering men, women, and children, without distinction. The Basques immediately flew to arms, and, reinforced by some regulars from the garrison of St. Jean Pied de Port, they nearly cut off one of Mina's battalions, and drove the others away. These outrageous proceedings on the part of the Spaniards, called for determined measures from Lord Wellington to repress them ; and in no point is the character of that great commander more admirable, than, when strong in the purity of his intentions, the firmness he displayed in carrying a principle into effect, involving as it did at that momentous period of the war consequences no less

important, than the probable alienation of an ally, from whom he had safely calculated on receiving a support of *forty thousand fighting men.*

To the Spaniards, the measures he adopted gave offence, and Morillo remonstrated with Lord Wellington. The commander-in-chief acceded to the request of the Spanish general ; and the letter that countermanded an order to keep Morillo's corps under arms breathes an uncompromising spirit throughout, that bespoke a determination, at every hazard, to exact obedience.

"Before I gave the orders of which you and the officers under your command have made such repeated complaints, I warned you repeatedly of the misconduct of your troops, in direct disobedience of my orders, which I told you I could not permit ; and I desired you to take measures to prevent it.

"I have sent orders to countermand those which I gave on the 18th ; but I give you notice that, whatever may be the consequence, I will repeat those orders, if your troops are not made by their officers to conduct themselves as well-disciplined soldiers ought.

"I did not lose thousands of men to bring the army under my command into the French territory, in order that the soldiers might plunder and ill-treat the French peasantry in positive disobedience of my orders ; and I beg that you and your officers will understand that I prefer to have a small army that will obey my orders, and preserve discipline, to a large one that is disobedient and undisciplined ; and that, if the measures which I am obliged to adopt to enforce obedience and good order occasion the loss of men, and the reduction of my force, it is totally indifferent to me ; and the fault rests with those who, by the neglect of their duty, suffer their soldiers to commit disorders which must be prejudicial to their country.

"I cannot be satisfied with professions of obedience. My orders must be really obeyed, and strictly carried into execution ; and if I cannot obtain obedience in one way, I will in another, or I will not command the troops which disobey me."

The determination of Lord Wellington had its effect. The counter-charges against the Spaniards were not to be denied ; and Morillo, obstinate and revengeful as he was, quailed before a spirit he found too commanding to be resisted, and did not venture to persevere in a course of action best suited, as his after-life evinced, to a ruthless and sanguinary temper. The mischief which Lord Wellington had dreaded was, however, already effected. The population of the Val de Baygorry armed,

and commenced a partisan warfare, which at last became so annoying, that the commander-in-chief published a manifesto, calling on the Basque peasantry either to join the French standard openly, or remain in peace at home ; threatening, if the order were not obeyed, that their villages should be fired, and such as were taken in arms should be hanged as banditti. This threat had the desired effect—self-interest also inducing them to keep on friendly terms with the allies ; and during the remainder of the war, the Basque peasantry preserved a strict neutrality.

The presence of an allied army in the south gave more real annoyance to Napoleon, than if aggressions had been committed on any other frontiers more directly exposed to hostilities, and where lineal distinctions alone marked territorial boundaries. To France, the Pyrenees had been hitherto considered sacred against invasion, as the blue waters that encompassed Britain ; and therefore, both pride and policy demanded that the mountain barrier should be recrossed. Indeed, Napoleon might have been justly anxious to expel an intruder, who marked the stability of his occupation by opening the ports of France and regulating their commercial relations. In every scene of life there is romance, and politics are influenced more than everything besides, by fortunate vicissitudes. Three years before, the framer of the Berlin and Milan decrees had excluded England from the Continent ; and he had lived to see that power whom he hated above all, not only welcomed in every European harbour, but even within the ports of France itself, receiving and rejecting vessels and merchandise as she pleased.

To remove Wellington from the southern provinces, under the existing pressure from without, was only to be accomplished by political intrigue ; and that lay in detaching the Spaniards from the general alliance, a task, which, from Napoleon's estimate of their national character, he considered as being easily effected. Ferdinand appeared to be the proper tool ; and him he selected as the means by which he should place the Peninsular contest for the present in abeyance, and thus avail himself of the services of those armies which still maintained themselves in the provinces of Catalonia and Valencia. The ex-monarch was at Valançay, leading the inglorious life best suited to a cold-blooded and stupid sensualist ; and Laforest, the agent of Napoleon, repaired thither under the assumed name of M. Dubois.

While negotiations were progressing, and it was still a doubtful

matter whether the Congress of Chatillon might not effect a peace, to which the Emperor of Russia had given an unwilling consent, an event occurred as important in a political view, as it was at that moment embarrassing to the allied general. In writing to Colonel Bunbury, Lord Wellington thus notices the occurrence :—

"The Duc d'Angoulême arrived here yesterday morning, and I have prevailed upon him to remain with his feigned title of Comte de Pradel. I shall be obliged to you if you will inform Lord Bathurst of the manner in which I became informed of his arrival, and the circumstances attending it ; and that I did not receive his lordship's letters of the 18th ult. till after my return to Passages on the 2nd. If I had, I should probably have made some effort to induce the Comte de Pradel to remain at St. Sebastian for a few days at least. But as it was, I received at eleven at night a letter from the Comte from Oyarzun, expressing his regret at not being able to arrive at St. Jean de Luz on that night, and his intention to be here in the morning ; and I had an interview with him at Urragne, in which I prevailed upon him to continue incognito till circumstances should change. These circumstances will account to the Cabinet for his being here ; and I shall be very much obliged to you if you will explain to them that, our troops being in fact cantoned in every village within the range that we occupy, it was not possible for the Comte de Pradel to come here at all without coming to the British army."

It was at this momentous period that Alexander had authorised his plenipotentiary to accede to the conditions offered by the allied sovereigns to the French Emperor. Peace therefore might have been considered as almost a political certainty. But the hand of fate was on Napoleon—fortune smiled faintly on his arms at Champaubert—that feeble gleam of success obliterated the memory of terrible disasters ; and with a rashness bordering on insanity, he rejected the liberal terms offered by his conquerors, and sealed his ruin !

To the soldier, winter is generally a season of repose—but it brought none to Lord Wellington. While Ferdinand and Napoleon were, as they believed, in secret correspondence, and a Royalist movement in the south of France was in active organisation, the allied sovereigns on January 1st had crossed the Rhine—with them the Rubicon—determined that France should be again restricted to her natural boundaries, the Pyrenees, the Alps, and the Rhine. To maintain his position in "the

sacred soil" was, therefore, with Lord Wellington a paramount consideration, but, from many untoward occurrences, a very doubtful one. He had reason to apprehend that Suchet would immediately unite his army with Soult's. He had been warned that on the Spaniards no reliance should be placed. Their outrages were terrible, and nothing could repress them. From their civil authorities the grossest insults were daily offered; and the most miserable subterfuges were resorted to by these degraded functionaries, secretly to annoy one whom they dared not openly oppose.

In the meantime the crisis of the war was hastening on. That deep and deadly hostility, which both his conquests and aggressions had excited in the breasts of the allied monarchs towards Napoleon, became every day more apparent—and there were not wanting indications at home, proving that in France an extensive disaffection towards the existing Government prevailed. In the greater towns the ruin of commerce had produced a rooted discontent—and in the mountain districts, the conscription was detested. The long-concealed feelings in favour of the exiled line, again were resuscitated in the south; and those who were friendly to a Bourbon restoration secretly and steadily increased. Lord Wellington's position within "the sacred soil" had also assumed a firmness that foreboded the most ruinous results; for his presence was now treated by the population with an indifference that evinced a declining regard for the Emperor, and proved that the allies were neither feared nor disliked in that country which they had invaded.

In the meantime, Lord Wellington had determined to recommence his operations so soon as the weather would permit his troops to move. After his last defeat in December, Marshal Soult had established the centre of his army on the right of the Adour reaching to Port de Lanne. His left extended along the right bank of the Bidouse to St. Palais, on the left of which place two cavalry divisions were posted, while St. Jean Pied de Port was strongly garrisoned, partly by regular troops, and partly by National Guards. The right wing, under Reille, occupied the entrenched camp at Bayonne; Drouet commanded on the Adour, Clausel on the Bidouse; and Harispe at St. Jean Pied de Port.

In that interval of inaction which the severity of the weather rendered unavoidable, Soult had received large reinforcements; and the strength and composition of the army of the south was considered so formidable by Napoleon, as to warrant his

removing two divisions of infantry, Treillard's cavalry, and several batteries, to enable him the better to withstand the threatened march of the allied monarchs on the capital. Towards the end of December, some slight affairs occurred on the Joyeuse and L'Arran, "ending, as those attacks usually do, by both parties remaining in the possession of the ground they had before held, with little loss on either side." The weather still continued wet and stormy ; the rivers were full—the roads impracticable—and while it was impossible for Lord Wellington to move, his opponent employed himself in securing, by artificial defences, a country whose natural strength was remarkable. Protected on his right flank by the entrenched camp and fortress of Bayonne, and on his left by St. Jean Pied de Port, the French marshal secured the bridges at Guiche, Bidache, and Came, by *têtes-de-pont*. In the rear, was the fortress of Navarreins on the Gave d'Oleron ; and, still more retired, Hastingues and Oyergave on the Gave de Pau, were placed in a condition of defence, Peyrehorade was also fortified—while in the rear of all, Dax was carefully entrenched, and made the grand depôt for the army.

The position occupied by Soult's army was in every respect well chosen, whether for aggression or defence. His wings were well advanced ; but their respective flanks were safely rested, and each upon a fortress ; while, in the centre, the command of the Adour and Gave de Pau enabled the French marshal to concentrate there in force, thus giving him a mass of troops in hand, ready for an offensive movement when any opportunity might occur ; while from his lateral communications, he could repel a flank attack with celerity and effect.

That the French marshal should have remained on the defensive, or at least until Suchet joined him from Catalonia, was undoubtedly the best course he could have adopted. The blockade of Bayonne would necessarily require a large detachment from the allied army—and to the remainder, Soult was still numerically equal. Hence, had the allied general endeavoured to force the French centre, he would have had the bulk of Soult's army, everywhere entrenched, to overcome ; while, if he ventured a flank movement, his own communications with St. Jean de Luz must have been seriously endangered.

The weather for a month kept the contending armies in their respective cantonments ; but the frost came on upon February 8th, and in a few days the roads were rendered hard enough to allow operations to recommence. Marshal

Soult made an ineffective attempt to relieve Jaca, which was reduced to the last extremity ; while Lord Wellington, bent upon passing the Adour below Bayonne, designed to mask his principal operation, by threatening the French left with Hill's corps, and holding the centre in check with that under Marshal Beresford. Accordingly, on the 12th and 13th, the allied right wing was concentrated around Hasparen and Urcurray ; and the opening of a grand series of operations was thus detailed to Earl Bathurst, in a despatch from St. Jean de Luz, dated February 20th, 1814 :—

"In conformity with the intention which I communicated to your Lordship in my last despatch, I moved the right of the army, under Lieutenant-General Sir Rowland Hill, on the 14th. He drove in the enemy's pickets on the Joyeuse River, and attacked their position at Hellette, from which he obliged General Harispe to retire with some loss towards St. Martin. I made the detachment of General Mina's troops in the valley of Baztan advance on the same day upon Baygorry and Bidarry ; and the direct communication of the enemy with St. Jean Pied de Port being cut off by Lieutenant-General Sir Rowland Hill's success at Hellette, that fort has been blockaded by the Spanish troops above-mentioned.

"On the following morning (the 15th), the troops under Lieutenant-General Sir Rowland Hill continued the pursuit of the enemy, who had retired to a strong position in front of Garris ; where General Harispe was joined by General Paris's division, which had been recalled from the march it had commenced for the interior of France ; and by other troops from the enemy's centre.

"General Morillo's Spanish division, after driving in the enemy's advanced posts, was ordered to move towards St. Palais, by a ridge parallel to that on which was the enemy's position, in order to turn their left, and cut off their retreat by that road ; while the 2nd Division, under Lieutenant-General Sir William Stewart, should attack in front. Those troops made a most gallant attack upon the enemy's position, which was remarkably strong, but which was carried without very considerable loss. Much of the day had elapsed before the attack could be commenced ; and the action lasted till after dark, the enemy having made repeated attempts to regain the position, particularly in two attacks, which were most gallantly received and repulsed by the 39th Regiment, under the command of the Hon. Colonel O'Callaghan, in Major-General Pringle's brigade.

The major-general, and Lieutenant-Colonel Bruce of the 39th, were unfortunately wounded. We took ten officers and about two hundred prisoners.

"I returned from Lieutenant-General Sir Rowland Hill's corps yesterday, in order to put in motion the left of the army, which I was in hopes I should have been able to have passed across the Adour below Bayonne ; for which operation a bridge has been prepared by the assistance of the navy.

"The weather is so unfavourable, however, that it is impossible to attempt this operation at the present moment ; and I therefore return to Sir Rowland Hill's corps to-morrow morning, in order to superintend the further operations in that quarter ; and I leave to Lieutenant-General Sir John Hope to cross the Adour whenever the weather will permit."

When Lord Wellington found that a passage of the Adour was not practicable owing to the stormy weather which prevailed, he confided that important operation to Sir John Hope, and rapidly returned to the right to force the Gaves, an attempt that proved eminently successful, and led to one of his noblest victories—that of Orthez.

The preparatory movements of the corps under Beresford, Hill, and Picton, had rendered the strong positions taken by the French marshal on the Gave d'Oleron and Gave de Pau untenable ; and as it was indispensable for the preservation of his magazines that Soult should abide a battle, he determined to hold the Bordeaux road, and accordingly concentrated his army at Orthez.

The position had every advantage for defence. The left and centre were particularly strong—the former, indeed, almost unassailable ; while the right, although it could be turned, would require extended movements, which must of necessity be dangerous in their execution, both from the difficuty of the ground the troops must traverse, and from the facility with which an army well in hand, could be brought to bear on any point that accident might weaken.

The left wing of the allies commenced the battle seriously about nine o'clock, although from daylight a partial fusillade had been kept up between the light troops, occasionally varied by the deeper booming of artillery. While the 3rd and 6th Divisions carried the lower grounds against which they had been directed, the 4th had won the village of St. Boes, and endeavoured, by desperate fighting, to gain a footing on the open ground behind it.

"Five times breaking through the scattered houses did Ross carry his battle into the wider space beyond; yet, ever as the troops issued forth, the French guns from the open hill smote them in front, and the reserved battery on the Dax road swept through them with grape from flank to flank. And then Taupin's supporting masses rushed forwards with a wasting fire, and lapping the flanks with skirmishers, which poured along the ravines on either hand, forced the shattered columns back into the village. It was in vain that with desperate valour the allies, time after time, broke through the narrow way, and struggled to spread a front beyond. Ross fell dangerously wounded; and Taupin, whose troops were clustered thickly and well supported, defied their utmost efforts. Nor was Soult less happy on the other side. The nature of the ground would not permit the 3rd and 6th Divisions to engage many men at once, so that no progress was made; and one small detachment which Picton extended to his left, having made an attempt to gain the smaller tongue jutting out from the central hill, was suddenly charged, as it neared the summit, by Foy, and driven down again in confusion, losing several prisoners."

Finding that the left attack had not succeeded, Lord Wellington detached a Caçadore battalion to clear Ross's right flank from the skirmishers that had annoyed it. But the Portuguese brigade was already broken and driven back, and the village cleared of the British troops, and again occupied by the enemy. On every side the attack had failed; for beyond a given point the assailants had never been able to advance—and now, disordered and repulsed, nothing appeared wanting but for the French marshal to push forward his reserves, and seize a decisive victory. But the lion was in the path. Wellington had galloped forward to direct the movements of his left wing personally; and now, in the thickest of the fire, he suddenly changed the plan of attack, and with that rapidity of conception, which with him had turned the fortunes of so many fields, he instantly changed his dispositions.

Directing Walker's division (the 7th) and Barnard's light brigade against the left of the height, where the French right united with the centre, he supported their attack by an advance of the 3rd and 6th Divisions, which previously had remained unengaged, until Beresford's operations should be demonstrated. In a moment, "the face of the battle was changed." The furious assault of the light brigade bore down resistance, and gained the crest of the hill. The 52nd bore right against a

French battalion which connected the divisions of Foy and D'Armagnac, and at the same time Picton and Clinton were moving on their flank. On both sides the musketry was close and destructive. Two generals, Bechand and Foy, were carried from the field ; and troops, so lately confident of victory, as suddenly became shaken and discouraged. Indeed, the storm had so strangely burst from an unexpected quarter—for the march of the 52nd had been hardly perceived save by the skirmishers—that the enemy "got into confusion, and the disorder spreading to Reille's wing, he also was forced to fall back and take a new position to restore his line of battle. The narrow pass behind St. Boes was thus opened, and Wellington, seizing the critical moment, thrust the 4th and 7th Divisions, Vivian's cavalry, and two batteries of artillery through, and spread a front beyond."

Instantly D'Armagnac's position was crowned by a British battery, whose fire swept through the columns exposed to their cannonade, and rent these heavy masses into pieces. In vain the French cavalry charged the English guns. The fire of the 42nd repulsed them—the 3rd Division fought with its customary determination—Inglis's brigade charged with the bayonet ; and Soult, seeing the ground was not to be recovered, commenced an orderly retreat, although but a brief space before his movements had indicated the advance that leads to victory.

How rapidly the fortunes of a battle alter ! Immediately after he had changed his dispositions for attack, Lord Wellington ordered Hill's corps to force the bridge of Orthez, an order that was promptly executed. Comprehending in a moment how matters went, Hill, when he crossed the Gave, pushed rapidly forward by a parallel ridge to that by which Soult must retire his beaten army to Sault de Navailles. The French retreat had already commenced, and nothing could be more soldierly than the steadiness with which it was conducted, as the whole *corps-d'armée* fell back by echelons of divisions, each covering the movements of the other, and holding by turns the different positions which the ground they crossed presented.

"In this manner the French yielded, step by step, and without confusion, the allies advancing with an incessant deafening musketry and cannonade, yet losing many men, especially on the right, where the 3rd Division were very strongly opposed. However, as the danger of being cut off at Salespice by Hill became more imminent, the retrograde movements were more hurried and confused ; Hill seeing this, quickened his pace, until at last

both sides began to run violently, and so many men broke from the French ranks, making across the fields towards the fords, and such a rush was necessarily made by the rest to gain the bridge of Sault de Navailles, that the whole country was covered with scattered bands. Sir Stapleton Cotton then breaking through with Lord Edward Somerset's hussars a small covering body opposed to him by Harispe, sabred two or three hundred men; and the 7th Hussars cut off about two thousand who threw down their arms in an enclosed field; yet, some confusion or mismanagement occurring, the greatest part recovering their weapons escaped, and the pursuit ceased at the Luy of Bearn."

By the opening of the Bordeaux road, an opportunity was afforded to Lord Wellington of carrying the war into the very heart of France, and encouraging a popular demonstration in favour of the exiled family. For this he was assured that everything was rife—that the attachment of the citizens of Bordeaux towards the Bourbons was sincere—and that, although the presence of a garrison faithfully devoted to Napoleon restrained an open declaration of their feelings, all that was required to produce a popular outbreak would be the advance of the allies; and hence, a very powerful movement might be made to overturn a tottering Government, and favour the restoration of Louis XVIII. Under these circumstances, Lord Wellington despatched Marshal Beresford, with the 4th and 7th Divisions, and Vivian's light cavalry, to take possession of Bordeaux.

But although no military difficulty was to be apprehended, there were many political considerations which might have induced Lord Wellington to waver in his resolution. The congress at Chatillon had not been broken up, and the question of peace or war was still alive, and remained to be decided. Napoleon's brilliant success in checking the invading armies, with a force decidedly inferior, had excited the strongest hopes that he might ultimately expel them from the French territories, and dissolve, what he believed to be, an ill-compacted alliance. On this belief he acted, even to the moment when the bond of union had been more firmly cemented between the contracting powers; and when Austria, Russia, Prussia, and Great Britain, had formed a league, offensive and defensive, for twenty years, each binding itself not to treat separately with the enemy, and each to keep on foot an army of 150,000 men, exclusive of garrisons, England reserving an option to subsidise other troops in place of her own, and agreeing to supply five millions sterling to be divided among the other powers for maintaining the war.

What, then, were Napoleon's demands, as contained in his *ultimatum* to the congress? He required for himself the whole line of the Rhine, a great part of that of the Waal, and the fortress of Nimeguen—Italy, including Venice, for his son-in-law Eugene Beauharnois—indemnities for that prince, as having been Grand Duke of Frankfort—for Jerome, on the score of his kingdom of Westphalia—for Louis, as Grand Duke of Berg—and for Joseph, not indeed in compensation for Spain, but for Naples—from whence Buonaparte himself had removed him to Madrid! Such demands were at once rejected, and the congress was dissolved.

On entering Bordeaux, Marshal Beresford was joyfully received by the Bourbonists. The mayor and municipality were in attendance to bid him welcome, and the tricoloured flag gave place to the white banner of the Royalists. On the same afternoon the Duc d'Angoulême made his entry, and Louis XVIII. was immediately proclaimed with the customary formalities.

The French marshal in the meantime had ascertained the real strength of his opponent; and considering it to be a favourable opportunity to strike a blow on the rear and right flank of the allies, he crossed the Adour on March 12th. Lord Wellington, while part of his detachments were coming forward, took a strong position at Garlin; and on March 20th, he communicated the subsequent operations to Earl Bathurst in a despatch from Tarbes, dated March 20th, 1814:

"The army marched on the 18th, and Lieutenant-General Sir Rowland Hill drove in the enemy's outposts upon Lembège. The enemy retired in the night upon Vic Bigorre; and on the following day, the 19th, held a strong rear-guard in the vineyards in front of the town. Lieutenant-General Sir Thomas Picton, with the 3rd Division and Major-General Bock's brigade, made a very handsome movement upon this rear-guard, and drove them through the vineyards and town; and the army assembled at Vic Bigorre and Rabastens.

"The enemy retired in the night upon Tarbes. We found them this morning with the advanced posts of their left in the town, and their right upon the heights near the windmill of Oleac. Their centre and left were retired, the latter being upon the heights near Audos. We marched in two columns from Vic Bigorre and Rabastens; and I made Lieutenant-General Sir Henry Clinton turn and attack the right with the 6th Division through the village of Dours; while Lieutenant-General

Sir Rowland Hill attacked the town by the high road from Vic Bigorre.

"Lieutenant-General Sir Henry Clinton's movement was very ably made, and was completely successful. The light division under Major-General C. Baron Alten likewise drove the enemy from the heights above Orleix ; and Lieutenant-General Sir Rowland Hill having moved through the town and disposed his columns for the attack, the enemy retired in all directions. The enemy's loss was considerable in the attack made by the light division ; ours has not been considerable in any of these operations."

That night, Soult retreated in two columns. D'Erlon's and Reille's reached St. Gaudens the following day, while Clausel's rejoined Pierre Soult's, at Monrejean. It was a long and harassing march ; but the French marshal was apprehensive that his retreat on Toulouse might have been cut off by Trie and Castlenau, towards which places the march of the 4th Division and Vivian's light cavalry had been directed. Accordingly, he fell back upon a city which, at the same time, was his principal depôt—"the knot of all his future combinations" —and the only position where he could hope to make a successful stand.

The allies marched by St. Gaudens, Galan, and Trie,—each place forming the route of a separate column. On the 22nd, a sharp affair between some squadrons of French and English cavalry took place in front of St. Gaudens, in which the 13th light dragoons were particularly distinguished. On the 25th, Hill, with the right wing, had entered Cacerez,—Wellington, with the centre, was at Samatan,—and Beresford, with the left column, at St. Foy. On the 26th, the armies again confronted each other,—Beresford taking post behind a small stream called the Aussonelle, while the French were in position on the Touch.

On the 28th, Lord Wellington proceeded to lay down his bridge ; but the water surface, on the sheer line being stretched over, was found too extensive to be covered by the pontoons. This failure elicited a remark from a staff officer, that, "until the river fell, a passage would not be effected." Lord Wellington observed instantly, with cheerful animation, but with strong decision, "If it will not do one way, we must try another ; for I never in my life gave up anything I once undertook."

On the 31st, the pontoons were laid down, and Hill crossed the Garonne ; but, from the state of the roads, it was found impossible to reach Toulouse in that direction—and consequently,

the right wing countermarched and recrossed to the left bank of the river. A better situation was found for laying the bridge—and on April 4th it was removed, and thrown across a bend of the Garonne, half a league above Grenade. Beresford crossed immediately, with the 4th and 6th Divisions and a cavalry brigade; but a sudden rising of the river prevented the light divisions and Freyer's Spaniards from following, for the pontoons were obliged to be taken up, to prevent their being swept away by the flood; and consequently, Beresford's position was isolated, and open to an overwhelming attack. Soult, however, did not avail himself of the advantage that accident had placed in his way; and on the 8th, the flood had sufficiently abated to allow the bridge to be replaced, and Freyer crossed and joined Beresford. On the 9th the pontoons were carried up the stream to Ausonne,—and on the 10th, the 3rd and light divisions passed the river at daylight, and Lord Wellington formed his divisions for the attack.

To a general circumstanced like Soult, the occupation of Toulouse was an object of paramount importance. It commanded the best bridges over the Garonne, and the chief roads throughout the country—while its arsenal, immense population, and lastly, its defensibility, gave it local advantages, which from its vicinity to his birthplace, the French marshal could properly appreciate. In a political, as well as a military view, Toulouse was of equal consideration. It was Soult's point of union with Suchet and Decaen, for either could join him there; and Suchet had been urged—and it was reasonably expected that he would have consented—to assist in what seemed the only course of operations which could check the prosperous career of Lord Wellington, to whom, since he passed the Pyrenees, every difficulty had been presented, and all had been overcome.

Toulouse offered, also, an excellent position on which a battle might be received. The breadth of the Garonne—the protection which the canal of Languedoc afforded—the strength of the fortified suburbs of St. Cyprien, St. Stephen, and Guillemerie—the heights of Sacarin and Cambon—and the stronger ridge of Mont Rave—all were most favourable for maintenance; and Soult with local knowledge, excellent judgment, and ample time, turned all to the best advantage. It was, in fine, a position in every respect important—easily held—and easily retired from.

Lord Wellington was delicately situated—and delay would not be serviceable. Bayonne indeed might fall, and the

Spaniards be brought forward from the Bastan ; but, during that time, Soult also would receive reinforcements, and employ every hour usefully in strengthening the defences of both the river and the city. Lord Wellington "had taken the offensive, and could not resume the defensive with safety ; the invasion of France once begun, it was imperative to push it to a conclusion. Leading an army victorious and superior in numbers, his business was to bring his adversary to battle as soon as possible ; and as he could not force his way through St. Cyprien in face of the whole French army, nothing remained but to pass the Garonne above or below Toulouse."

Before daybreak on the 10th, the light and 3rd Divisions crossed the river, driving in the French outposts ; the Spanish corps gained the Pugade ; Beresford, in three columns, but without artillery, passed the marshes between the Ers and Mont Rave ; while the light cavalry forced the French from the bridge of Bordes, and seized that of Montaudran.

On the left of Beresford's march, the Ers flowed parallel to the fortified heights upon his right—and the swamp narrowed as he advanced, and its surface became every step more difficult. Headed by a division of dragoons—one flank shut in by a river—the other, overlooked by heights bristling with artillery and crowned by fourteen thousand infantry, Beresford pushed forward without a gun, gained the point he aimed at, and formed at the foot of the position.

The line was scarcely completed when the French vigorously attacked it—but a flight of rockets went roaring through their ranks ; and that arm of war, so lately introduced, terrified and disordered troops who never before had witnessed their effect, nor heard the appalling noise that accompanies their discharge. Lambert's and Anson's brigades rushed forward with a deafening cheer. The charge of Vial's cavalry on the right flank was repulsed ; and on the left it was anticipated by the rapid advance of the 4th Division. Nothing could check that conquering movement. The plateau was gained—two redoubts carried at the bayonet's point—and Taupin killed in a vain attempt to rally his flying troops, who hurried off in the greatest disorder to Sacarin and Cambon.

For a brief space the battle ceased. Soult employed the interval in reinforcing his right from his reserves, while Beresford got his artillery from Mont-Blanc. About two o'clock the action was renewed, and Pack and Douglas, the former with the Highland, the latter with a Portuguese brigade, rushed from

the hollow ground which had previously sheltered them, and mounting the heights, carried the whole French defences including the redoubts of Colombette and Calvinet.

Sustained by the reserves pushed freely into action, and covered by a tremendous fire of artillery, the French with superior numbers returned to the attack, and a terrible contest ensued. One redoubt was recovered ; but still, though sadly reduced, the remnant of the Highlanders held the hill ; and the 6th Division having steadily advanced, the enemy were again driven from the hardly contested eminence—Colombette a second time taken—and the French finally retired, carrying with them Generals Harispe and Baurot, both severely wounded in encouraging a desperate but vain resistance.

The tide of battle turned ; and it was hopeless to expect that the allies could be dislodged by any fresh effort that Soult could make. Beresford had got his artillery into line ; and, already master of the greater portion of Mont Rave, he was marching along its crest to renew the action. Picton was threatening the bridge from which he had been previously repulsed—the Spaniards had rallied and reformed—and the light division was ready to support their new attack. Soult, under all these circumstances, declined the contest ; abandoned the northern portion of the plateau and redoubt at Calvinet ; and, contenting himself with retaining the fortified posts at Sacarin and Cambon, fell back behind the canal, leaving the whole line of works and the heights of Mont Rave in the undisputed possession of the allies.

In this sanguinary battle the allied loss exceeded four thousand six hundred men, including four generals, Brisbane, Pack, Mendizabel, and Espelette, wounded. The French casualties might probably have been less by a thousand ; but they lost a gun, and had five generals placed *hors-de-combat*. It was a lamentable contest, because it was a useless one. Much blood had been unnecessarily—and some assert—wantonly spilled ; for Napoleon was already hurled from his throne, and a provisional Government had been appointed.

It has been asserted that before the battle of Toulouse was fought, Soult was in full possession of the events which had already taken place in Paris ; that he was apprised of Napoleon's abdication, and also that a convention had been settled ; and that with this knowledge, and consequently, the most atrocious cruelty, he caused a wanton slaughter both to his enemy and himself ; and nearly a similar charge has been made against Lord Wellington. Both these accusations were unfounded.

That Wellington should have sought an action, under the discouraging prospects which an attack upon Toulouse held out, would be—and without any object to influence it—to risk a reputation gained by a glorious succession of victories which had already reached their consummation. That Soult could have received orders from the Provisional Government, was an impossibility. The direct route by which a courier could find him in Toulouse, from the 4th, had been in possession of the allies. His despatches were sent from the capital on the 7th—consequently they must have first arrived at the British outposts—and hence, by an official communication from Lord Wellington, Soult, two days after the battle, received that intelligence which it was falsely insinuated had reached him before that day of carnage—April 10th.

Although this cruel charge against the Duke of Dalmatia was extensively circulated and believed, by those best qualified to estimate its truth or falsehood, it was always scornfully repudiated. By friends and enemies the calumny against the French marshal was denounced ; and by none, and with more warmth and indignation, than by the victor of Toulouse. When "Lord Aberdeen, after the passing of the English Reform Bill, repeated the accusation in the House of Lords, and reviled the Minister for being on amicable political terms with a man capable of such a crime, Lord Wellington rose on the instant and emphatically declared that Marshal Soult did not know, and that it was impossible he could know of the Emperor's abdication when he fought the battle."

Soult's night retreat was ably executed, his corps defiling within range of the English artillery ; and although Hill's division and the light cavalry pursued, his losses were confined to some fifty dragoons which were overtaken and cut off. On the same day, Lord Wellington entered Toulouse amid the acclamations of the Bourbon party, who immediately upon Soult's departure, raised the white flag, and declared for Louis XVIII. That evening, two officers, Colonels Cooke and St. Simon, reached the city after a vexatious delay near Blois, bearing authenticated intelligence that the reign of Napoleon had ended —and St. Simon was despatched to Soult, at whose head-quarters he arrived early next day.

While these events had been progressing in the south, the crisis of Napoleon's fortunes was hurrying with fearful rapidity to its consummation. It will be a subject of surprise to after ages, how blind Napoleon appeared to coming events, when

all beside could see that the hand of fate pointed so clearly at his downfall; and it will also be cause for admiration, to observe with what indomitable resolution he bore up against accumulating evils, and still "plucked laurels as he fell." Reduced by the defeat at Arcis, on March 20th, to the command of an army not exceeding seventy-five thousand men, on the 22nd, he had thrown himself behind the allies on the Marne, and marching on Vitry and St. Dizier, declared that "he would reach Vienna before they should arrive in Paris." But the allies, justly considering this act as only a rash effort of despair, pushed steadily forward towards the capital—drove the French marshals from the Marne—concentrated their *corps d'armée* at Chalon—and, on March 29th, invested the northern portion of the capital.

When Napoleon found that the enemy were neither to be diverted nor deterred, he determined to counter-march on Paris. The direct route was, however, blocked by a Prussian corps at Vitry; and he could only reach the capital by a *détour* of fifty leagues. Accordingly, his troops were put in motion, while he went forward post, and on the 31st, was within three leagues of Paris. There, he learned that every hope was over. After a sharp action on the heights of Bellevue, the allies took a position that dominecred the city; when finding that Paris could not be defended, Joseph Buonaparte retired from the Regency, and Marmont capitulated. On that evening, the Duke of Ragusa marched out with his artillery—the barriers were immediately given up—and on the 31st, the allied sovereigns entered Paris, no demonstration of attachment towards the Emperor being evinced, nor the slightest disorder ensuing.

Finding that his capital was in the possession of his enemies, Napoleon repaired to Fontainebleau, collected any troops which could be obtained, and announced his intention of "marching direct to Paris" on the 3rd. But on the 2nd, a decree passed the Conservative Senate, based upon an abdication of the throne.

Thus was the war concluded, happily for all parties, even for the French, whom nothing but such a series of defeats could have delivered from the tyranny which their former victories had brought upon themselves. It was by the national spirit which had first shown itself in the Peninsula, by the persevering efforts of Great Britain in the Peninsular war, the courage of her troops, and the skill of her great commander, that Buonaparte's fortune had been checked at its height, and successfully resisted, till other Governments were encouraged, and other nations

roused by the example ; and that power, the most formidable which had ever been known in the civilised world, was then beaten down. The independence of Spain and Portugal had been triumphantly vindicated and secured ; and if the civil liberties of both countries were not restored, and firmly established upon a sure foundation, the cause is to be found, not in any foreign influence exercised ill, but in old evils which time had rendered inveterate.

Buonaparte remained still at Fontainebleau ; Elba had been named for his future residence, with a liberal allowance for the maintenance of an establishment, that still should bear the semblance of a royal one ; and commissioners were nominated on the part of the allied powers to conduct the fallen Emperor to the place of his destination. On arriving at Fontainebleau they were very coolly received, and Colonel Campbell was the only one to whom Napoleon was civil. Noticing the traces of old wounds, he asked him in what battles he had received them, and on what occasions he had been invested with the orders he wore. He next questioned him as to the place of his birth, and Colonel Campbell having answered that he was a Scotchman, Napoleon congratulated him on being the countryman of Ossian, his favourite author, with whose poetry, however, he was only acquainted through the medium of wretched translations. On this first audience Napoleon said to the colonel, "I have cordially hated the English. I have made war against you by every possible means, but I esteem your nation. I am convinced that there is more generosity in your Government than in any other. I should like to be conveyed from Toulon to Elba by an English frigate"—a request that was subsequently acceded to.

After a humiliating journey, during which the insecurity of popular affection was amply proved, Napoleon embarked at Frejus in the *Undaunted* frigate, and proceeded to "the lonely isle," which was to form the dominions of one for whose ambition half the Continent had not been found sufficient.

While these momentous changes were in progress, the allies were assembled in the capital of France to organise anew the political relations of Europe, on which Napoleon's arbitrary enactments had produced such serious changes. As the representative of Great Britain, Lord Castlereagh hastened to the convention, having recommended to the Prince Regent, that the office of ambassador to the Court of France should be given to Lord Wellington ; and on the 21st, Sir Charles Stewart was

despatched to Toulouse to apprise the allied commander of the appointment, and request his presence in the French capital to assist in the important deliberations that should occur.

Finding that he might safely quit the army, to whose discipline he had previously borne an honourable testimony, he set out for the French capital on the night of the 10th, and arrived in Paris on May 4th. From all, his reception was enthusiastic ; and each of the allied sovereigns expressed in unqualified praise, how much the glorious issue of the long and doubtful struggle for the restoration of European liberty had been indebted to his talents and enduring constancy. From the restored king (Ferdinand) he had recently received a letter expressing the deepest gratitude and esteem ; and the Order of the Sword had been sent him by the Crown Prince of Sweden. But a higher distinction awaited him—a dukedom was conferred upon himself, and peerages on his most distinguished lieutenants.

The DUKE OF WELLINGTON'S stay in Paris was necessarily brief ; and from the French capital he proceeded to Madrid, where his presence was ardently expected. The country was threatened with a political convulsion, which Ferdinand's early display of unamended despotism and cruelty seemed calculated to hurry to a crisis. From the commanding influence which the duke possessed over every party, it was considered possible that the spirit of the contending factions might be sufficiently moderated to lead to such practicable alterations, as might restore national tranquillity; and, anxious for its accomplishment, he left Toulouse, and reached Madrid on May 24th.

On June 5th, the Duke took his departure ; on the 10th, he rejoined the army at Bordeaux, and the peace having been signed by the allied powers in Paris, nothing remained but to break up the armies in the south, and despatch the troops under orders for America, with the least possible delay. In a letter to Earl Bathurst, the Duke of Wellington announced that the necessary arrangements for these purposes had been completed ;—and on the same day he took leave of the finest army, for its number, that had ever been embattled.

"GENERAL ORDER.

"BORDEAUX, *June 14th*, 1814.

"1. The Commander of the Forces, being upon the point of returning to England, again takes this opportunity of congratulating the army upon the recent events which have restored peace to their country and to the world.

"2. The share which the British army has had in producing these events, and the high character with which the army will quit this country, must be equally satisfactory to every individual belonging to it, as they are to the Commander of the Forces; and he trusts that the troops will continue the same good conduct to the last.

"3. The Commander of the Forces once more requests the army to accept his thanks.

"4. Although circumstances may alter the relations in which he has stood towards them, so much to his satisfaction, he assures them that he shall never cease to feel the warmest interest in their welfare and honour; and that he will be at all times happy to be of any service to those to whose conduct, discipline, and gallantry, their country is so much indebted."

Immediately afterwards, the Duke of Wellington proceeded to England; and on the 23rd, he reached Dover. His reception, after a long absence of five years, was thus described in a periodical of that day:—"About five o'clock this morning, his Majesty's sloop-of-war, the *Rosario*, arrived in the roads, and fired a salute. Shortly afterwards, the yards of the different vessels of war were manned; a salute took place throughout the squadron, and the launch of the *Nymphen* frigate was seen advancing towards the harbour, with the Duke of Wellington: at this time the guns upon the heights and from the batteries commenced their thunder upon the boat leaving the ship; and on passing the pier-heads his Lordship was greeted with three distinct rounds of cheers from those assembled; but upon his landing at the Crosswall, nothing could exceed the rapture with which his Lordship was received by at least ten thousand persons; and notwithstanding it was so early, parties continued to arrive from town and country every minute. The instant his Lordship set his foot on shore, a proposition was made, and instantly adopted, to carry him to the Ship inn: he was borne on the shoulders of our townsmen, amidst the reiterated cheers of the populace."

The allied sovereigns had preceded him to England on their memorable visit to the Regent; and being at Portsmouth to witness the grand spectacle of a naval review, the duke set out the following morning to pay his duty to his prince. Wherever he appeared the most enthusiastic greetings marked the attachment of the people towards the great captain of the age; and on the 28th he appeared for the first time in the House of Lords since his well-merited elevation to the peerage of Great Britain.

A national excitement terminates generally in the disappointment following upon success, or in the bitterer feelings produced by unexpected reverses. And such was the feverish state of France at the commencement of a year that opened "big with events." Early in February the Duke of Wellington repaired from Paris to Vienna to replace Lord Castlereagh, whose presence was deemed so indispensable at home before the meeting of the British Parliament, that, though the Congress was still engaged, as it had been since the preceding October, he was obliged to absent himself from its deliberations, and nominate a successor. Months had passed—the manifold and conflicting interests of the several European powers required so much consideration, that the progress of the general settlement was necessarily slow. The attitude of the Continent presented the appearance of an armed peace, for each State maintained a war establishment, and seemed to be preparing rather for the field, than seeking the repose to which, for a quarter of a century, Europe had been a stranger. This delay, however, in resuming peaceful relations proved most fortunate—for one of the most singular events which history records suddenly and unexpectedly occurred—Napoleon's escape from Elba.

The effect produced by this extraordinary attempt, when the intelligence reached Vienna, is thus detailed by the Duke of Wellington in a despatch to Lord Castlereagh:—

"I received here on the 7th instant a despatch from Lord Burghersh, of the 1st, giving an account that Buonaparte had quitted the island of Elba, with all his civil and military officers, and about one thousand two hundred troops, on February 26th. I immediately communicated this account to the Emperors of Austria and Russia, and to the King of Prussia, and to the Ministers of the different powers, and I found among all one prevailing sentiment, of a determination to unite their efforts to support the system established by the peace of Paris.

"As it was uncertain to what quarter Buonaparte had gone, whether he would not return to Elba, or would even land on any part of the Continent, it was agreed that it was best to postpone the adoption of any measure till his further progress should be ascertained; and we have since received accounts from Genoa, stating that he had landed in France, near Cannes, on March 1st; had attempted to get possession of Antibes, and had been repulsed, and that he was on his march towards Grasse.

"No accounts had been received at Paris as late as the

middle of the day of the 5th of his having quitted Elba, nor any accounts from any quarter of his further progress.

"The Emperors of Austria and Russia and the King of Prussia have despatched letters to the King of France, to place at his majesty's disposal all their respective forces ; and Austrian and Prussian officers are despatched with the letters, with powers to order the movement of the troops of their respective countries placed on the French frontiers, at the suggestion of the King of France.

"The plenipotentiaries of the eight powers who signed the Treaty of Paris assembled this evening, and have resolved to publish a declaration, in which they will, in the name of their sovereigns, declare their firm resolution to maintain the peace and all its articles with all their force, if necessary. I enclose the draught of what is proposed to be published, which, with the alteration of some expressions and the omission of one or two paragraphs, will, I believe, be adopted.

"Upon the whole, I assure your Lordship that I am perfectly satisfied with the spirit which prevails here upon this occasion ; and I do not entertain the smallest doubt that, if unfortunately it should be possible for Buonaparte to hold at all against the King of France, he must fall under the cordially united efforts of the sovereigns of Europe."

Whatever trifling differences might have hitherto prevailed among the members of the Congress, regarding territorial or financial questions, every consideration yielded now to the emergency of the day; and all cordially united in one design, and expressed a firm determination of maintaining the Treaty of Paris inviolate, and placing the disturber of Europe without the pale of civil and social relations. Accordingly, on March 13th, a "Declaration" was signed and promulgated by plenipotentiaries on the part of their respective Courts.

CHAPTER XXII

THE military dispositions of the allies to render unavailing Napoleon's efforts to regain that throne, from which, most fortunately for the peace of Europe, they had succeeded in removing him, were framed on a magnitude to achieve the end, should the French nation prove faithless to the Bourbons. In other quarters symptoms of disquiet had appeared. Murat had

been arming with suspicious haste; and as his dissatisfaction at the present state of things was not concealed, his warlike preparations could be intended for no purpose but to disturb the existing tranquillity of the Continent; and hence, it was necessary that Italy should be secured from his aggressions. To hold the Neapolitan army in check, a corps of 150,000 Austrian troops was made available. Two hundred thousand Austrian, Bavarian, and Confederated Germans, were ordered to collect upon the Upper Rhine—an equal number of Prussian, British, and Hanoverian were to occupy Flanders—the whole to be supported by a grand reserve of 200,000 Russians—and thus more than 700,000 men would promptly be in active operation.

It will appear, however, singularly unaccountable, that while the most serious consequences were to be dreaded from Napoleon's evasion, in England the danger seemed unfelt, and the Government treated it as an ordinary event requiring no additional exertion. By the treaty of Chaumont it was arranged that Great Britain should increase her forces on the Continent; and the Duke of Wellington urged the necessity of that part of the treaty being immediately carried into effect; but so supine were the Ministry that even the militias were not called out, while every moment was of deep importance, and Napoleon's military strength progressing with giant strides. The Declaration of the allies was impugned in Parliament as a document which went far to encourage assassination—and forgetting that the insatiate ambition of a restless man would probably cause the slaughter of a million, there were found in the British senate many who, with mawkish sensibility, reprobated the Duke for being party to a treaty that eventually secured the world's peace, and deprived the disturber of the Continent of the future power of being mischievous. The Duke of Wellington felt and expressed the injustice of thus attacking "a servant of the public when absent on public service, day after day;' and in a letter to his brother, justified the allied Declaration by reasoning that was not to be contravened.

The Declaration of Vienna was calculated to produce a sensation in France, which Napoleon would have willingly avoided. To prevent its dissemination was impossible; and he thought it expedient to counteract its effects, by accompanying the document with a manifesto of his own. This contained an elaborate justification of his enterprise, a specific detail of the grievances real or imaginary, which were cited as the pretexts for invading France, and an appeal to the law of nations,

against the doctrine supposed to be inculcated by the language of that celebrated anathema. But the assertions and arguments of Napoleon were feeble apologies for a wanton interruption of those peaceful relations which his reappearance was certain to disturb; and if a portion of the French nation, misled by personal attachment, were blind to the flimsy veil with which he would have shrouded the workings of inexcusable ambition, others viewed the act in its true colours, and trembled for the consequences that should follow.

None saw more clearly the results which his madness must produce than the aggressor; and he made a last, but ineffectual, attempt to avert the hostility of Europe, and obtain a recognition of his power from the allied sovereigns. Abandoning the usual mode of official communication between Governments, and imitating his conduct when elected to the consular throne, Napoleon addressed a letter personally to the different monarchs. But the allies were not to be imposed on by assurances of peaceful intentions, from one who for years had deluged the Continent in blood. Napoleon's letter was returned from the British Cabinet unopened; and at Vienna, it elicited from the Congress a fresh Declaration of personal hostility, which neither concessions nor promises could avert.

Had Napoleon really expected that professions, falsified by every action of his life, would avert the storm that was collecting, the firm and uncompromising rejection of his overtures would have dissipated the hope. The sword was drawn, and the scabbard was thrown away. Through blood he had waded to a throne—by bloodshed only could that elevation be maintained—and with a desperate resolution he proceeded to attain the means by which he could secure the object of a guilty ambition. With few exceptions, every man in France between the ages of twenty and sixty was called out, and commissioners were spread over the country to urge forward a general enlistment. The columns of the *Moniteur* were daily filled with the most exaggerated accounts of warlike preparation. "The aggregate was vauntingly computed at about 2,000,000 of effective men; but not more than one-tenth was actually equipped and took the field. The Imperial Guard was re-established, and consisted of eighty infantry regiments, five regiments of cavalry, several corps of gendarmerie, engineers, etc., composing a total of more than 40,000 men. Unceasing exertions were made to provide a powerful artillery, which was always an important point in Napoleon's preparations," and that

they were successful, was sufficiently proved by the number of cannon abandoned at the rout of Waterloo.

Napoleon's exertions were equally directed to obtain means for aggression and defence; and while an enormous army was rapidly embodied, the positions and places of strength extending from the capital to the frontiers were completed. "Napoleon also wished to fortify Paris, and inquired of Carnot how much time and money would be necessary. 'Two hundred millions, and three years,' replied the Minister, 'and when it is finished, I would ask only 60,000 men and twenty-four hours to demolish the whole.' Buonaparte concealed his resentment at this answer, and persisted in a partial execution of his purpose. The heights of Montmartre, of Chaumont, and of Mesnil-Montant were fortified, but the Parisians viewed the labour with natural alarm. It betrayed two probable events: that Napoleon calculated upon the advance of the enemy as far as the capital, and that he was determined to endure a siege—either of them sufficient to inspire terror."

Napoleon's journey from Paris was secret and expeditious. Before daylight on the 12th he quitted the capital, and on the 14th joined the army collected on the frontier. Ere sunrise next morning he was dressed, and at dawn he was on horseback. His *corps d'armeé* were already in march—the Prussian outposts driven in—and a last campaign opened, which three days virtually concluded.

In strength and composition the hostile armies differed essentially from each other; and the numerical estimates given by military writers are so irregular and conflicting, that a careful examination of their various statements is required, before an accurate conclusion can be arrived at.

Of the three armies now collected on the French frontier, that commanded by the Duke of Wellington was the weakest and the worst. It was, with few exceptions, a "green army," formed of a mixed force, comprising British, Hanoverian, and Belgian troops, with the contingents of Nassau and Brunswick Oels. Its effective strength on June 15th was 78,500 men, of whom 53,000 only were British, Germans, and Hanoverians. On the 18th its numbers were considerably reduced—for by that morning's returns, the grand total of the force under the immediate orders of the Duke of Wellington, was 74,400 men.

The general distribution of the army, previously to the commencement of hostilities, was as follows: the right wing, under Lord Hill, was near Ath; the left, under the Prince of Orange,

at Brain-le-Comte and Nivelles ; a strong corps of cavalry, under the Marquess of Anglesca, was quartered near Grammont ; while a reserve, of all arms, occupied the city and vicinity of Brussels, where the Duke had fixed his head-quarters.

The Prussian army was considerably stronger than that termed British ; and on May 27th it was fully concentrated on the Meuse—the 1st corps, commanded by Von Ziethen, being at Charleroi ; the 2nd, under Von Pirch, at Namur ; the 3rd, under Thielman, near Ciney ; and the 4th (Bulow's), at Liége. Its total strength was returned at 115,000 men.

The French army, previous to the opening of hostilities, comprised the five grand corps which formed the armies of the North and the Moselle, and amounted, on a low calculation, to 150,000 men. The 1st corps was commanded by Drouet (Count d'Erlon) ; the 2nd, by Reille ; the 3rd, by Vandamme ; the 4th, by Gerard ; and the 6th, by Lobau. To these were attached four divisions of cavalry, under Pajol, Excelmans, Valmy, and Milhaud—the whole forming a distinct corps, commanded by Marshal Grouchy. There were, besides, two divisions of the guard, under Friard and Morand, making, according to a French return, a grand total of 154,370 men ; of whom 24,750 were cavalry, 7,520 artillery, and 122,100 infantry, with 296 pieces of cannon.

While the French army exceeded the Duke of Wellington's in number, in its composition it was still more superior. The elements for its construction were ready for Napoleon's use—for the country was overrun with soldiers—men, according to Davoust's term, "whose trade was war, and whose battles were as many as their years." From the moment the return of the Emperor was announced, these veterans hurried to his standards. To organise a practised soldiery was comparatively an easy task ; and hence the army with which Napoleon crossed the frontier, as far as numbers went, was equal to any that he had ever directed on a battle-field. That commanded by Lord Wellington was formed of very different materials. A mixed force, hastily collected, and imperfectly put together, what unity of operation could be expected in the hour of trial, from men whose languages were unknown to each other—whose dresses were unfamiliar to the eye—whose efficiency was untried—and whose courage and fidelity were doubtful ? The greater portion of the Peninsular soldiers had been unfortunately removed beyond recall. Half the regiments in Belgium were, therefore, second battalions composed of militiamen and recruits ; and of the contingent

troops, many were but recently embodied, and few had ever been under fire; and yet, with this indifferent army, inferior in numbers, in discipline, in equipments, and in artillery, did the Duke of Wellington accomplish a triumph, unparalleled even in the series of his own great achievements.

Napoleon had already directed the initial movements of the detached corps which were to comprise his grand army. Early in June, the 1st corps was at Valenciennes, the 2nd at Maubeuge, and head-quarters at Laon. On the 5th and 6th, the army of the Moselle broke up from its cantonments round Metz, and advanced by Phillipville, while the army of the north united itself to that of the Ardennes, at Beaumont, on the 13th. On his arrival at Avesnes, Napoleon found his whole force in line, and perfectly disposable to launch against that point of the frontier which might appear to him the most assailable. As yet his plans were as little known to his own officers as to those of the allies; but on the 14th, the publication of a General Order, partially disclosed his intentions; and his last address was made to the last army he was destined to command :—

"Soldiers!

"This day is the anniversary of Marengo and of Friedland, which twice decided the destiny of Europe. Then, as after the battle of Austerlitz, as after the battle of Wagram, we were too generous. We believed in the protestations and in the oaths of princes, whom we left on their thrones. Now, however, leagued together, they aim at the independence, and the most sacred rights of France. They have committed the most unjust aggressions. Let us then march and meet them. Are not we and they still the same men? Soldiers! at Jena, against the same Prussians, now so arrogant, you were one to three, and at Montmirail one to six. Let those among you, who have been captives to the English, describe the nature of their prison-ships, and the horrible sufferings they endured. The Saxons, the Belgians, the Hanoverians, the soldiers of the Confederation of the Rhine, lament that they are obliged to use their arms in the cause of princes, who are the enemies of justice and the rights of all nations. They know that this coalition is insatiable. After having devoured twelve millions of Poles, twelve millions of Italians, one million of Saxons, and six millions of Belgians, it now wishes to devour the states of the second rank in Germany.

"Madmen! One moment of prosperity has bewildered them. The oppression and humiliation of the French people

are beyond their reach: if they enter France, they will find their tomb there. Soldiers! we have forced marches to make, battles to fight, and dangers to encounter; but, if we are firm, victory will be ours. The rights, the honour, and the happiness of the country will be recovered. To every Frenchman who has a heart, the moment is now arrived, when he should either conquer or die!"

At daylight, on the 15th, Napoleon commenced hostilities. His 2nd corps crossed the Sambre, near Thuin, and drove in Ziethen's outposts, who fell back on Fleurus to concentrate with the Prussian corps. On both sides the fighting was determined. Charleroi was obstinately maintained; and although vigorously pressed by the French cavalry, Ziethen retreated with perfect steadiness. That evening Napoleon's head-quarters were at Charleroi.

The night of the 15th was employed by the Emperor in passing his remaining divisions to the left bank of the Sambre, and by Blucher, in taking a position on which he might accept a battle. The 1st Prussian corps was posted at St. Amand; the 3rd, at Brie; the 4th, at Ligny; and the 2nd, in reserve. The attack on Ziethen was communicated to the Duke of Wellington in Brussels, at half-past four in the afternoon; but it was merely intimated that a sharp affair of outposts had occurred—for as yet the more serious operations of Napoleon were wrapped in mystery—and whether he would actually become assailant was uncertain.

Convinced that the Emperor was determined to enter Belgium, the Duke of Wellington made the necessary dispositions to concentrate his army on the extremity of a position, immediately connecting his own left flank with the right wing of the Prussian army. The point on which Wellington's detached corps were directed to unite, was a hamlet called Quatre Bras, standing on the intersection of the great road from Charleroi to Brussels, by that running from Namur to Nivelles. The village is small; and the adjacent country presents a surface in which woodlands and corn-fields are intermixed. The Bois de Bossu is close to the hamlet; and its distance from Brussels is about twenty English miles.

The prudence of Napoleon's attack has been, and will ever be, a doubtful question. If judged by military rules, it was a dangerous experiment; and the whole operations appear to have been rather conceived in the spirit of desperate adven-

ture, than under the sounder calculations which should influence the decision of a commander. His plans were beyond his power. One battle he might have delivered with effect—for two, his means were totally insufficient ; his success at Ligny had therefore no results ; and his repulse at Quatre Bras left him in a worse position than when he commenced hostilities. Finally, the issue proved that he dared much—did much—risked a desperate game—failed—and was ruined irretrievably.

Many circumstances united to give additional interest to the commencement and the close of the Belgic campaign. Never did the events of a few days produce more important consequences ; and, till the storm burst, nothing but conjecture could point out the quarter, on which, with characteristic impetuosity, Napoleon would precipitate his masses.

Brussels, from its immediate contiguity to the frontier, and being the head-quarters of the commander-in-chief, was at the period filled by an influx of strangers. On the 15th, no unusual excitement was discernible—the streets were crowded—and although it was believed that Napoleon had joined the army, and consequently was within a few marches of the city, the capital of Belgium appeared gay and undisturbed, as if that dreaded man had still remained an inmate of the Tuileries. The day passed, and rumour was busy ; but until the arrival of the Prince of Orange in the evening, nothing was known beyond there having been an affair between the outposts. The duke, after receiving his illustrious visitor, resumed his place at the dinner-table ; when shortly afterwards, General Muffling, the Prussian general attached to the British army, "came into the room, with evident marks of having proceeded hastily, when a chair was reached, and he was placed next to his Grace, with whom he entered into close conversation, and delivered some official despatches. The duke occasionally addressed himself to Sir T. Picton. The movements of the enemy created no surprise—all was quiet and regular, the decisive movement for action was not yet come.

"The second courier arrived from Blucher before twelve o'clock on the night of the 15th, and the despatches were delivered to the Duke of Wellington in the ball-room of the Duchess of Richmond. While he was reading them, he seemed to be completely absorbed by their contents ; and after he had finished, for some minutes he remained in the same attitude of deep reflection, totally abstracted from every surrounding object,

while his countenance was expressive of fixed and intense thought. He was heard to mutter to himself—'Marshal Blucher thinks,'—'It is Marshal Blucher's opinion;'—and after remaining thus abstracted a few minutes, and having apparently formed his decision, he gave his usual clear and concise orders to one of his staff-officers, who instantly left the room, and was again as gay and animated as ever; he stayed supper, and then went home."

But before the ball had ended, the strains of courtly music were drowned in the louder "note of preparation." The drum had beat to arms, the bugle sounded "the assembly," and the Highland bagpipe added its wild and martial summons to the field. All were already prepared, all were promptly under arms—and the 5th Division filed from the Parc with the corps of Brunswick Oels, and directed their march through the forest of Soignies.

Eight o'clock pealed from the steeple clocks; all was quiet—the brigades, with their artillery and equipages, were gone—the crash of music was heard no longer—the bustle of preparation had ceased—and an ominous and heart-sinking silence succeeded that noise and hurry which ever attends a departure for the field of battle.

Early in the afternoon, Ney's attack was made with the vigour and determination which superior numbers encourage—and it was gallantly and successfully repulsed. But physical force gradually prevailed—the Hanoverians fell back—the Bois de Bossu was occupied by the enemy—and when the leading regiments of the 5th Division reached Quatre Bras, with reduced strength the Prince of Orange was bravely but feebly opposing assailants, encouraged by success, and whose superiority could no longer be resisted. A march of more than twenty miles, executed in sultry weather, and over a country where little water was procurable, had abated the vigour of the British brigades, but their spirit was indomitable. The Duke of Wellington had overtaken the column in its march; and when he reached Quatre Bras, at a glance he saw the critical position of the day, and instantly directed that the Bois de Bossu should be regained.

Ney, whose infantry doubled that of his opponent, sustained by a proportionate artillery, and the fine cavalry division under Excelmans, was pushing his advantages to their crisis. Checked, however, by the arrival of the British battalions, he strove to crush them before they could deploy—and, under a withering fire of artillery, to which the weak Hanoverian batteries

ineffectively replied, he launched his cavalry against the regiments as they reached their battle-ground. All was in his favour—his horsemen were in hand—the rye-crop, reaching breast-high, covered their advance—and the charges were made before the regiments were established. But English discipline and courage rose superior to the immense advantages which circumstances conferred upon their assailants—and in every effort the enemy was roughly repelled. Lancers and cuirassiers were driven back with desperate slaughter—while whole squadrons, shattered in their retreat, and leaving the ground covered with their dead and dying, proved with what fatal precision the British squares sustained their fusillade. The carnage was dreadful—the conflict obstinately maintained on either side—the French, from their superiority in cavalry and artillery, committing a slaughter which was well repaid by the terrible fire of the British musketry.

"Evening was now closing in; the attacks of the enemy became fewer and feebler; a brigade of heavy cavalry and horse artillery came up, and, worn out by the sanguinary struggle of six long hours, the assailants ceased their attack, and the 5th Division with the 3rd and the Guards took up a position for the night on the ground their unbounded heroism had held through this bloody day.

"Ney fell back upon the road to Frasnes. The moon rose angrily—still a few cannon shot were heard after daylight had departed; but gradually they ceased. The fires were lighted, and such miserable provisions as could be procured, were furnished to the harassed soldiery; and while strong pickets were posted in the front and flanks, the remnant of the British, and their brave allies, piled arms, and stretched themselves on the battle-field.

"The loss sustained by the British and their allies in this glorious and hard-contested battle amounted to 3,750 *hors de combat*. Of course the British suffered most severely, having 316 men killed, and 2,156 wounded. The Duke of Brunswick fell in the act of rallying his troops, and an immense number of British officers were found among the slain and wounded. During an advanced movement the 92nd, after repulsing an attack of both cavalry and infantry, was retreating to the wood, when a French column halted and turned its fire on the Highlanders, already assailed by a superior force. Notwithstanding, the regiment bravely held its ground until relieved by a regiment of the Guards, when it retired to its original

position. In this brief and sanguinary conflict, its loss amounted to 28 officers and nearly 300 men.

"The casualties, when compared with the number of the combatants, will appear enormous. Most of the battalions lost their commanding officers, and the rapid succession of surbordinate officers on whom the command devolved, told how fast the work of death went on. Trifling wounds were disregarded—and men severely hurt refused to retire to the rear, and rejoined their colours after a temporary dressing."

Like that at Quatre Bras, the conflict at Ligny only closed with daylight. For five hours the struggle had been obstinately continued. Men fell by hundreds, and two hundred pieces of artillery were turned against the devoted villages, for whose possession Napoleon and Blucher were contending. Both generals pushed their reserves freely into action; and as soon as one battalion was destroyed, another came forward, and mounting over the dead and dying, charged through the blazing houses of Ligny and St. Amand. At four o'clock the fortune of the day was so doubtful, that Napoleon hastily called up the 1st corps, which Ney had also despatched an aide-de-camp to hurry to his assistance at Quatre Bras. Night came on—no decisive advantage had been gained—and Blucher, like a wounded lion, although with feebler strength, seemed to fight with additional ferocity.

At daybreak, of the 17th, the whole of the allies were up and ready to accept battle; but as the Duke of Wellington had been apprised during the night, that Blucher had retreated to unite himself with his 4th corps, and concentrate his army on the Wavre, it was necessary for the allied commander to maintain his communication with the Prussians, and make a correspondent movement; and accordingly he determined to fall back on a position already chosen, in front of the village of WATERLOO.

The position which Wellington took up was most judiciously selected. It extended along the front of the Forest of Soignies, near the point where the Brussels road is intersected by that from Nivelles. At this point stands the hamlet of Mont St. Jean; and at the debouch of the forest, the village of Waterloo is built. The French adopted the former as their designation of the battle of June 18th; the latter, however, was chosen by the conqueror, to give a name to his last, and his most glorious victory.

Early in the morning the dispositions of the allies were

completed. The British right reclined on a ravine near Merke Braine, and the left appuied upon a height above Ter la Haye. The whole line was formed on a gentle acclivity, the flanks partially secured by small hollows and broken grounds. The farmhouse of La Haye Sainte, in front of the left centre, was defended by a Hanoverian battalion—and the château of Hougomont, in advance of the right centre, was held by a part of the Guards and some companies of Nassau riflemen. Wellington considered this to be the key of his position, and great attention was bestowed upon its defence. In addition to its natural advantages, the walls were crenellated to afford perfect facility for the musketry and rifles of its defenders.

Behind this chain of posts the first line, composed of Wellington's finest battalions, was formed. The second was rather in a hollow, and partially sheltered from the enemy's artillery. The third, composed of cavalry, was in the rear, extending nearly to Ter la Haye. At the extreme right, the British army obliqued to Merke Braine, and defended the road to Nivelles. The extreme left was in communication with the Prussians by the road to Ohain, leading through the passes of St. Lambert. A corps of observation, under Sir Charles Colville, comprising a large portion of the 4th Division, was stationed at Halle, to defend the British right, if attacked, and cover Brussels if it should be turned.

Cooke's division (the Guards) occupied a rising ground beside Hougomont, while its right rested on the Nivelles road. Alten's division was formed behind La Haye Sainte, with its left on the road of Charleroi. The Brunswickers were partly in line with the Guards and partly in reserve; and one of their battalions was extended in the wood of Hougomont, *en tirailleur*. On the left, Picton's division, Lambert's brigade, a Hanoverian corps, and some Dutch troops, extended along the lane and hedge which traverse the undulating ground between Ter la Haye and the road to Charleroi; and the village itself, that of Smohain, and the farm of Papilotte, adjoining the wood of Frichermont, was garrisoned by Nassau troops under the command of the Prince of Weimar.

No part of the allied position was remarkable for natural strength; but where the ground displayed any advantages, they had been made available for defence. The surface of the field of Waterloo was perfectly open—the acclivities of easy ascent—and the whole had an English appearance of unenclosed corn-fields, in some places divided by a hedge. Infantry movements could

be easily effected, artillery might advance and retire, and cavalry could charge. On every point the British position was assailable; and the island soldier had no reliance but in "God and his Grace"—for all else depended on his own stout heart and vigorous arm.

The morning of the 18th was wet and gloomy, but as the day advanced, the weather gradually improved. From the allied position the French were distinctly seen as they came up, forming columns, and making the other preparatory dispositions for a battle. The British divisions were equally exposed to the enemy's view; and when the different brigades were discovered getting into battle order, Napoleon exhibited mingled feelings of satisfaction and surprise, exclaiming to one of his staff—"*Ah! je les tiens donc ces Anglais!*"

About nine o'clock the French dispositions were commenced, and at half-past eleven they were completed. The 1st corps (D'Erlon's) were formed in front of La Haye Sainte, its right extended towards Frichermont, and its left resting on the Brussels road. The 2nd corps, leaving its right on D'Erlon's left, extended itself in the direction of Hougomont with a wood in front. Behind these corps was the cavalry reserve of cuirassiers, the grand reserve consisting of the Imperial Guard, occupying the heights of La Belle Alliance. The 6th corps, under Count Lobau, with the cavalry of D'Aumont, were left in the rear of the French right, to observe the Prussians in the event of their debouching by the Ohain road, through the defiles of Saint Lambert.

Napoleon's own position was with his reserve. There, with his hands behind him, he paced back and forward, issuing orders, and observing the progress of his attack. "As the battle became more doubtful, he approached nearer the scene of action, and betrayed increased impatience to his staff by violent gesticulation, and using immense quantities of snuff. At three o'clock he was on horseback in front of La Belle Alliance; and in the evening, just before he made his last attempt with the Guard, he had reached a hollow close to La Haye Sainte. Wellington, at the opening of the engagement, stood upon a ridge immediately behind La Haye, but as the conflict thickened, where difficulties arose and danger threatened, there the duke was found. He traversed the field exposed to a storm of balls, and passed from point to point uninjured, and on more than one occasion, when the French cavalry charged the British squares, the duke was there for shelter."

The strength of the British and French armies has been variously and very differently stated. The former, including its corps of observation, which were non-combatant on the 18th, with the Brunswickers, Belgians, and Nassau contingent, amounted to 74,400. The force of the latter (French), from the contradictory statements, is difficult to be determined with accuracy—probably 90,000 would be nearly its amount. Taking its original strength at 145,000, deducting 10,000 *hors-de-combat* in the battles of the 15th and 16th, and reckoning Grouchy's corps at 45,000, we shall find that 90,000 Frenchmen were on the field of Waterloo. Certainly Buonaparte was equal in men, and very superior in artillery ;—the French parks amounting to 296 pieces, while the British and Belgian guns did not exceed 150.

From daybreak occasional shots had been interchanged between the light troops ; but when two mighty armies, and each commanded by the " meteors of an age," were preparing for a terrible and decisive contest, a desultory fusillade scarcely attracted attention. At noon, Joseph Buonaparte directed the 2nd corps to advance against Hougomont. The British batteries opened on the French masses as they debouched—their own guns covered their advance—and under the crashing fire of 200 pieces of artillery—a fitting overture for such a field—Waterloo opened, as it closed, magnificently !

CHAPTER XXIII.

After a careful reconnaissance, Napoleon determined that the centre of the allies was the most vulnerable point of the allied position ; and he directed his 2nd corps to advance and carry the important post of Hougomont.

This place, destined to obtain a glorious celebrity, was an old-fashioned country house, and had once been the residence of a Flemish nobleman. It stood on low ground about three hundred yards in front of the right centre of the allied line, and close to where it leaned upon the road leading from Nivelles to Waterloo. On one side there was a large farmyard and out-buildings ; on the other, a garden, surrounded by a high brick wall. An open wood, covering an area of some three or four acres, encircled the château ; but as it was free from copse, and the trees stood apart from each other, it only masked the post without adding much to its strength. In this wood some Nassau riflemen were

stationed. The house and garden was occupied by the light companies of the Coldstream and 3rd Guards. A detachment of the 1st Battalion was posted in the wood upon the left; and the remainder on a small eminence immediately in the rear of the château, as a support to the troops who garrisoned the house and defended the enclosures. The whole force to which the key of the duke's position was entrusted, did not exceed 1,800 men, of whom 300 were Nassau sharp-shooters. The troops in the house were commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Macdonnell; and those in the wood by Lord Saltoun.

Shortly before eleven o'clock, the enemy's columns were put in motion against Hougomont—and the battle of Waterloo began. Comprising three divisions, nearly thirty thousand strong, the French attack was made in close columns, supported by the fire of numerous batteries, and the effect was grand and imposing beyond description. As the heads of the enemy's masses rose above the hollow ground which had hitherto concealed their movement, the British artillery opened with round and case shot; and the French and Nassau light troops commenced a sharp and rapid fusillade. But the latter was forced to yield to numbers—the wood was carried—and the château and its dependencies were vigorously and resolutely assaulted.

But the defence was able, as it was obstinate. On the French masses the fire of the English musketry fell with rapid precision; and the perseverance of the enemy only produced a bloodier discomfiture. The French gave ground—the Guards charged from the enclosures—part of the wood was recovered—and the fire of the British howitzers cleared the remainder of it from the enemy.

The repulse of Joseph's corps was followed by a tremendous cannonade,—for on both sides every gun, which would bear, had opened. The fire was furiously continued. Heavy bodies of cavalry were seen in motion; and it was easy to foresee that this terrible cannonade would be followed by more desperate and more extended efforts.

On perceiving the French cavalry display, the duke ordered his centre divisions to form squares by battalions; but as this formation exposed them to the fire of the French artillery, they were retired to the reverse of the slope, and there found shelter from a cannonade still fiercely kept up, and as fatally returned from the allied batteries, whose service all through that trying day was remarkable for its precision and rapidity.

The French attacks were again renewed against Hougomont —but they were as unavailing as they had proved before. Their artillery fire, however, had become too oppressive to be sustained ; the duke ordered fresh batteries forward to keep it under ; and every new effort of the enemy increased the slaughter, but failed in either abating the spirit or the obstinacy of the defence.

At last, despairing of success, the French artillery opened with shells upon the house—the old tower of Hougomont was quickly in a blaze—the fire reached the chapel, and many of the wounded, both assailants and defenders, there perished miserably. But still, though the flames raged above, shells burst around, and shot ploughed through the shattered walls and windows, the Guards nobly held the place, and Hougomont remained untaken.

While these terrible attacks were continued against the right centre, the left of the allied position was also furiously assailed. The recession of the English regiments behind the crest in front of which they had previously been formed, appears to have misled Napoleon—and a movement intended only to shelter the infantry from the French guns, was supposed to have been made with an intention of retreating. Under this belief Napoleon ordered his 1st corps forward, to fall on that part of the position extending between La Haye Sainte and Ter la Haye.

Shortly before two, Drouet advanced, drove a Belgian brigade roughly back, and the head of his columns reached the broken hedge that partially masked the 5th Division. After repulsing the cavalry, Picton formed line, and moved Kempt's and Pack's brigades forward to meet the anticipated attack. The heads of the enemy's columns were already within forty yards, when the musketry of the 5th Division delivered a rolling volley that annihilated the leading sections and produced a visible confusion. Picton saw and seized the crisis, and thundered the word "Charge !" It was the last he uttered—for the next moment a musket bullet perforated his forehead, and he dropped from his saddle a dead man.

The division, however, obeyed the order of their fallen chief, charged through the hedge, and routed their assailants. It was one of those moments which a battle presents, and which, when seized on, restores the fortunes of a doubtful field, and not unfrequently, snatches an unexpected victory. The 2nd cavalry brigade was immediately behind the 5th Division, forming a line of 1,300 broadswords. Lord Anglesea observing that the French cuirassiers and lancers were preparing for a flank attack upon

the British infantry, led on the heavy cavalry—and the Royals, Greys, and Enniskilleners, charged with a vigour and effect that bore down every opposition. In vain mailed cuirassier and formidable lancer met these splendid horsemen. They were overwhelmed; and the French infantry, already broken and disorganised by the 5th Division, fell in hundreds beneath the swords of the English dragoons. The eagles of the 45th and 105th Regiments, and upwards of two thousand prisoners, were the trophies of this brilliant exploit.

In cavalry encounters, whether success or defeat attend the charge, to a greater or a less degree the assailants must be disorganised; and acting as the 2nd Brigade did at Waterloo, against an arm immeasurably superior, the splendid onset of the British dragoons was eventually repulsed; and in turn, they were obliged to yield to the attack of horsemen whose order was unbroken. Many gallant officers and soldiers fell, and none more regretted than their chivalrous leader, Sir William Ponsonby. "Having cut through the first column, he passed on to where Colonel Dorville was so hotly engaged, and found himself outflanked by a regiment of Polish lancers, in a newly ploughed field, the ground of which was so soft, that the horse could not extricate itself. He was attended by only one aide-de-camp. At that instant, a body of lancers approached him at full speed. His own death he knew was inevitable, but supposing that his aide-de-camp might escape, he drew forth the picture of his lady, and his watch, and was in the act of delivering them to his care, to be conveyed to his wife and family, when the enemy came up, and they were both speared upon the spot. His body was afterwards found lying beside his horse, and pierced with seven wounds. It is said, however, he did not fall unrevenged, for the brigade he commanded, had an opportunity, before the battle ceased, of again encountering the Polish lancers, almost every one of whom was cut to pieces."

An attack had been simultaneously made by part of D'Erlon's division on the farmhouse of La Haye Sainte, which had been repelled by the Germans under Baron Alten; and they, in turn, were charged by Milhaud's cuirassiers. But forming square, steadily and rapidly, their assailants galloped on without breaking a battalion, and suffered a heavy loss from the musketry of some regiments diagonally placed, whose fire was closely and coolly delivered.

Passing the intervals between the squares, the French cuirassiers topped the crest behind the British infantry. This

chivalrous act was recompensed by nothing but its daring ; for, before a splendid charge of the Life Guards, Blues, and 1st Dragoon Guards, that celebrated cavalry whose prowess had turned the tide of many a doubtful field, gave way ; and in the *mêlée*, hand to hand, steel helmet and cuirass proved no protection against the stalwart arm of the English trooper. The conflict was short and severe ; and Milhaud's cavalry were deforced and driven into the valley.

Farther to the left, an opportunity of charging an unsteady regiment of French infantry was seized by Colonel Ponsonby. With the 12th Light Dragoons and a Belgian corps, the attack was gallantly made—but in turn, these regiments were assailed by the French lancers, and driven back with serious loss.

Another and more determined attack was made about this period of the battle upon Hougomont—but the duke had reinforced the weakened garrison—and favoured by the cover which the houses and enclosures afforded, the fresh assault failed totally. The obstinacy with which Napoleon endeavoured to win this important post, may be best estimated by the terrible expenditure of life his repeated attacks occasioned. Eight thousand men were rendered *hors-de-combat* in these attempts; and when evening and defeat came, the burning ruins were still in the possession of those gallant soldiers who had held them nobly against so many, and so desperate attacks.

It was strange, that throughout the sanguinary struggle, but one success crowned the incessant efforts of Napoleon—the temporary possession of the farmhouse of La Haye Sainte. "Its defence had been intrusted to Colonel Baring, with a detachment of the German legion, amounting to about three hundred men, subsequently reinforced by two hundred more. The attack began at one o'clock, and continued above two hours. Several guns were brought to bear upon the house—but the conflict was chiefly maintained by massy columns of infantry, who advanced with such fury, that they actually grasped at the rifles of the besieged as they projected through the loopholes. Four successive attempts were thus made, and three times the assailants were gallantly beaten off. Twice the enemy succeeded in setting fire to a barn or out-house, contiguous to the main building—but both times it was fortunately extinguished. The numbers of the garrison, at length, began to diminish—many were either killed or wounded—and at the same time their ammunition was failing. It became impossible to supply the one, or reinforce the other, for there was no practicable com-

munication with the rest of the army. The men, reduced to five cartridges each, were enjoined to be not only sparing of their fire, but to aim well. A fourth attack was now made, by two columns, stronger than either of the preceding, and the enemy soon perceived that the garrison could not return a shot. Emboldened by this discovery, they instantly rushed forward, and burst open one of the doors ; but a desperate resistance was still made with the sword-bayonet through the windows and embrasures. They then ascended the walls and roof, whence they securely fired down upon their adversaries. This unequal conflict could not long continue, and after an heroic defence the post was surrendered. It is affirmed that the French sacrificed to their revenge every man whom they found in the place. It is at least certain, that some individuals were most barbarously treated. The shattered and dilapidated state of the house after the battle, conspicuously evinced the furious efforts which the enemy made for its possession, and the desperate courage displayed in its defence. The door was perforated by innumerable shot-holes ; the roof destroyed by shells and cannon-balls ; there was scarcely the vestige of a window discernible, and the whole edifice exhibited a melancholy scene of ravage and desolation. Yet when obtained, it afforded no advantage commensurate to the loss with which it had been purchased ; for the artillery, on an adjacent ridge, continued to pour down such a destructive and incessant fire, that Napoleon could make but little use of the conquest to promote his subsequent operations."

Still the situation of the allied army became every moment more critical—its own glorious efforts exhausting its strength, and every noble repulse rendering it less capable of continuing what seemed to prove an endless resistance. Though masses of the enemy had fallen, thousands came on anew. With desperate attachment, the French army pressed forward at Napoleon's command ; and while each advance terminated in defeat and slaughter, fresh battalions crossed the valley, and, mounting the ridge with cries of *Vive l'Empereur!* exhibited a devotion which never has been equalled. Wellington's reserves had gradually been brought into action ; and the left, though but partially engaged, dared not, weakened, to send assistance to the right and centre. Many battalions were miserably reduced, and presented but skeletons of what these beautiful brigades had been when they left Brussels two days before. The loss of individual regiments was prodigious. One had four hundred men mowed down in square without

drawing a trigger: it lost almost all its officers; and a subaltern commanded it for half the day. Another, when not two hundred men were left, rushed into a French column and routed it with the bayonet; a third, when nearly annihilated, sent to require support: none could be given, and the commanding officer was told that he must "stand or fall where he was!"

"No wonder that Wellington almost despaired! He calculated, and justly, that he had an army who would perish where they stood—but when he saw the devastation caused by the incessant attacks of an enemy, who appeared determined to succeed, is it surprising that his watch was frequently consulted, and that he prayed for night or Blucher?"

Never did a battle demand more stoic courage than Waterloo from its commencement to its close. Nothing is more spirit-sinking to a soldier than the passive endurance of offence—nothing so intolerable, as to be incessantly assailed, and not permitted, in turn, to become assailant. The ardent struggle for a hard-fought field, differs immeasurably from the cheerless duty of holding a position, and repelling, but not returning, the constant aggressions of an enemy.

"In an attacking body there is an excited feeling that stimulates the coldest and blunts the thoughts of danger. The tumultuous enthusiasm of the assault spreads from man to man, and duller spirits catch a gallant frenzy from the brave around them. But the enduring and devoted courage which pervaded the British squares when, hour after hour, mowed down by a murderous artillery, and wearied by furious and frequent onsets of lancers and cuirassiers; when the constant order, 'Close up!—close up!' marked the quick succession of slaughter that thinned their diminished ranks; and when the day wore later, when the remnants of two, and even three regiments were necessary to complete the square, which one of them had formed in the morning—to support this with firmness, and 'feed death,' inactive and unmoved, exhibited a calm and desperate bravery which elicited the admiration of one, to whom war's awful sacrifices were familiar.

"Knowing, that to repel these desperate and sustained attacks, a tremendous expenditure of human life was unavoidable, Napoleon, in defiance of their acknowledged bravery, calculated on wearying the British into defeat. But when he saw his columns driven back in confusion—when his cavalry receded from the squares they could not penetrate—when

battalions were reduced to companies by the fire of his cannon, and still that 'feeble few' showed a perfect front, and held the ground they had originally taken—no wonder that his admiration was expressed to Soult—'How beautifully these English fight! But they must give way.'"

Evening came, and yet no crisis. Napoleon, astounded by the terrible repulses which had attended his most desperate attacks, began to dread that the day would have an unfavourable issue, and that Soult's estimate of the stubborn endurance of the English infantry might prove fatally correct. Wellington, as he viewed the diminished numbers of his brave battalions, still presenting the same fearless attitude that they had done when the battle opened, yet felt that to human endurance there is a limit; and turned his glass repeatedly to that direction from which his expected support must come. At times, also, the temper of the troops had nearly failed; and, particularly among the Irish Regiments, the reiterated question of "When shall we get at them?" showed how ardent the wish was to avoid inactive slaughter, and, plunging into the columns of the assailants, to avenge the death of their companions. But the "Be cool, my boys!" from their officers was sufficient to restrain this impatience—and, cumbering the ground with their dead, they waited with desperate intrepidity for the hour to arrive when victory and vengeance should be their own!

At last, the welcome sound of distant artillery was heard in the direction of St. Lambert, and a staff officer reported that the head of the Prussian column was already in the Bois de Paris. Advised therefore, that his gallant ally would presently come into action, the duke made fresh preparations to repel what he properly anticipated would be the last and the most desperate effort of his opponent.

Satisfied that his right flank was secure, Lord Hill was directed to send Clinton's division, with Mitchell's brigade, and a Hanoverian corps from the extreme right, towards the centre, which the reinforcement of Hougomont, by the removal of Byng's brigade, had weakened. Chassé's Dutch division was also moved to the lower ground from Braine la Leud as a support to the right of the position; and, subsequently, the light cavalry of Vandeleur and Vivian were both brought forward; and where danger was apprehended, care was taken to have a sufficient force in hand to meet the storm which was presently about to burst.

It is said that Napoleon felt assured that the cannonade which announced Blucher's advance, was only the fire of Grouchy's guns, who, in obedience to his repeated orders, had reached the battle-ground alone, or was advancing, *pari passu*, and holding Bulow's corps in check. This intelligence was rapidly conveyed along the line ; and, to a soldiery easily exhilarated, victory appeared certain, and preparations were made, for what was believed to be, a final and triumphal attack.

But the illusion was brief. The Prussians debouched from the wood at Frichermont—and half Napoleon's right wing was thrown back, *en potence*, to check their attack, while his last grand movement should be executed against the allied army in his front.

While Napoleon directed that great effort which he anxiously hoped might prove decisive, the British infantry, who held the threatened point, were laid down on the reverse of the crest they occupied, to obtain shelter from the enemy's artillery. With its proverbial intrepidity, the Imperial Guard, in close column, came on to the assault—and nothing could be more imposing than the steadiness with which they ascended the slope of the position, although the fire of the English guns fell upon their dense masses with ruinous precision. Presently, the Guards moved forward to the crest of the height ; and the finest infantry in the world confronted each other at the distance of fifty paces. The cheers of the French formed a striking contrast to the soldier-like silence with which the English received the attack ; and shouts of *Vive l'Empereur !* were only answered by a rolling volley. The first steady fire of the British Guards disorganised the crowded column—and the fusillade was rapidly and steadily sustained. Vain efforts were made by the French officers to deploy, and the feeble fire of their leading files was returned by a stream of musketry that carried death into ranks in close formation, and every moment increased their disorder. The word to charge was given—the Guards cheered, and came forward—but the enemy declined the contest, and the shattered column hurried down the hill, with the precipitate confusion attendant on a heavy repulse. After routing their opponents, the victorious infantry halted, re-formed, fell back, and resumed their former position.

Nor was the attack of Napoleon's second column more fortunate. After repelling the attack of the first column of the Imperial Guard, Maitland's brigade brought its left

shoulders forward to meet the second column, which was now advancing, while Adam's brigade, pivoted on its left, moved its right wing rapidly on, having Bolton's troop of artillery in the angle, where the right of the Guard touched the left flank of the light brigade. Undismayed by the repulse of the first column, the second topped the height in perfect order, and with a confidence which bespoke the certainty of success. But the musketry of Maitland's left wing smote the column heavily in front; and the fire of the light regiments fell, with terrible effect, on the flank of a mass already torn and disordered by the close discharge of grape and case shot from the English battery. The ground in a few minutes was covered with dead and wounded men—the confusion increased—the disorder became irremediable. To stand that intolerable fire was madness—they broke—and, like the first column, endeavoured to reach the low ground, where, sheltered from this slaughtering fusillade, they could have probably reorganised their broken array. But this was not permitted. Pressed by the Guards—charged by the 52nd—retreat became a flight, and Wellington completed the *déroute* by launching the cavalry of Vivian and Vandeleur against the mass, as it rushed down the hill in hopeless disorder.

This, indeed, was the crisis of the battle. The Prussian demonstration, slight at first, had latterly become more dangerous and decided. The whole of the 4th corps had now got up, with Pirch's division of the 2nd, and Ziethen's column appeared on the right flank of the French, and rendered Count Lobau's position still more critical. The discomfiture of Ney's attack had produced over the French corps a general unsteadiness; and before it was possible to rally and renew the fight, one grand and general attack decided the doubtful field, and consummated the ruin of Napoleon.

As the French right gradually receded, the allied line, converging from its extreme points at Marke Braine and Braine la Leud, became compressed in extent, and assumed rather the appearance of a crescent. The marked impression of Blucher's attack—the debouch of Ziethen by the Ohain road—and the bloody repulse inflicted on the Imperial Guard—all told Wellington that the hour was come, and that to strike boldly was to secure a victory. The word was given to advance. The infantry, in one long and splendid line, moved forward with a thrilling cheer—the horse artillery galloped up, and opened with

case shot on the disordered masses, which, but a brief space before, had advanced with such imposing resolution. Instantly, the allied cavalry were let loose ; and, charging headlong into the enemy's columns, they turned retreat into rout, and closed the history of one of the bloodiest struggles upon record.

For a short time, four battalions of the Old Guard, comprising the only reserve which Napoleon had left unemployed, formed square, and checked the movements of the cavalry. But, "panic-stricken and disorganised, the French resistance was short and feeble. The Prussian cannon thundered in their rear ; the British bayonet was flashing in their front ; and, unable to stand the terror of the charge, they broke and fled. A dreadful and indiscriminate carnage ensued. The great road was choked with the equipage, and cumbered with the dead and dying ; while the fields, as far as the eye could reach, were covered with a host of helpless fugitives. Courage and discipline were forgotten. Napoleon's army of yesterday was now a splendid wreck. His own words best describe it—'It was a total rout !'

"The last gleam of fading sunshine fell upon the rout of Waterloo. The finest army, for its numbers, that France had ever embattled in a field was utterly defeated ; and the dynasty of that proud spirit, for whom Europe was too little, was ended.

"Night came: but it brought no respite to the shattered army of Napoleon ; and the moon rose upon the 'broken host' to light the victors to their prey. The British, forgetting their fatigue, pressed on the rear of the flying enemy ; and the roads, covered with the dead and dying, and obstructed by broken equipages and deserted guns, became almost impassable to the fugitives—and hence the slaughter from Waterloo to Genappe was frightful. But, wearied with blood (for the French, throwing away their arms to expedite their flight, offered no resistance), and exhausted with hunger and fatigue, the British pursuit relaxed, and between Rossome and Genappe it ceased altogether. The infantry bivouacked for the night around the farmhouses of Caillou and Belle Alliance, and the light cavalry halted one mile farther on, abandoning the work of death to their fresher and more sanguinary allies. Nothing, indeed, could surpass the desperate and unrelenting animosity of the Prussians towards the French. Repose and plunder were sacrificed to revenge : the memory of former defeat, insult and oppression, now produced a dreadful retaliation, and overpowered every feeling of humanity. The *væ victis* was pronounced, and thousands, beside those who

perished in the field, fell that night beneath the Prussian lance and sabre. In vain a feeble effort was made by the French to barricade the streets of Genappe, and interrupt the progress of the conquerors. Blucher forced the passage with his cannon ; and so entirely had the defeat of Waterloo extinguished the spirit, and destroyed the discipline, of the remnant of Napoleon's army, that the wild hurrah of the pursuers, or the very blast of a Prussian trumpet, became the signal for flight and terror."

It was a singular accident, that near La Belle Alliance the victorious generals met ; for thither, Blucher, on forcing the French right, had urged forward his columns in pursuit. Comparatively fresh, the Prussians engaged to follow up the victory —and the allies left the great road open, and bivouacked on the field.

By moonlight, Wellington recrossed the battle-ground, and arrived for supper at Brussels—an honour which Napoleon had promised to confer upon that ancient city. The excited feelings which such a victory must have produced, are said to have suffered a reaction, and given way to deep despondency, as he rode past "the dying and the dead." God knows, it was "a sorry sight"—for on a surface, not exceeding two square miles, fifty thousand dead or disabled men and horses were extended.

CHAPTER XXIV

The victory of Waterloo was decisive, and every exertion was subsequently made to follow up its success, and secure the advantages which skill and courage had obtained. The Prussian corps pressed the retreat with a spirit and alacrity that prevented any immediate rally from being attempted ; and on the 19th Wellington was moving in excellent order upon the French capital—a wonderful military exploit, after such a conflict as that of Waterloo.

The decisive results of Wellington's success may be estimated from the inability of every attempt made by the wreck of the French army to arrest the allied march upon the capital ; and the details, as given officially by the duke, will best establish how totally Napoleon's power was destroyed by that brief campaign,—how fatal had been the defeat inflicted on the field of Waterloo.

"We have continued," he says, "in march on the left of

the Sambre since I wrote to you. Marshal Blucher crossed that river on the 19th, in pursuit of the enemy, and both armies entered the French territory yesterday; the Prussian by Beaumont, and the allied army under my command, by Bavay.

"We have blockaded Le Quesnoi and Valenciennes; the Prussian army Landreçy and Maubeuge. Avesnes surrendered to the latter last night.

"I expect the King of France at Mons to-morrow. I have written to urge him to come forward, as I find the people in this country well disposed to his cause; and I think it probable that he might be able to get possession of some of the fortresses.

"The remains of the French army have retired upon Laon. All accounts agree in stating that it is in a very wretched state; and that, in addition to its losses in battle, and in prisoners, it is losing vast numbers of men by desertion. The soldiers quit their regiments in parties, and return to their homes; those of the cavalry and artillery selling their horses to the people of the country.

"The 3rd corps, which, in my despatch of the 19th, I informed your lordship had been detached to observe the Prussian army, remained in the neighbourhood of Wavre till the 20th. It then made good its retreat by Namur and Dinant. This corps is the only one remaining entire."

* * * * *

"I may be wrong, but my opinion is, that we have given Napoleon his death blow; from all I hear, his army is totally destroyed, the men are deserting in parties, even the generals are withdrawing from him. The infantry throw away their arms, and the cavalry and artillery sell their horses to the people of the country, and desert to their homes. Allowing for much exaggeration in this account, and knowing that Buonaparte can still collect, in addition to what he has brought back with him, the 5th *corps d'armée*, under Rapp, which is near Strasbourg, and the 3rd corps, which was at Wavre during the battle, and has not suffered so much as the others, and probably some troops from La Vendée, I am still of opinion that he can make no head against us."

* * * * *

While these operations were in progress, which achieved, for the second time, the deliverance of the Continent, we will briefly narrate the occurrences of the last days of Napoleon's reign, which ended his strange and eventful public history.

After dark, on the 20th, Napoleon reached the capital, ac-

companied by his brother Jerome, Count d'Erlon, and a small staff—and occupied the Palais de l'Elysée. The night was consumed in numerous consultations with his friends, and in framing the bulletin of a battle, which had laid France "bare and defenceless, and placed her at the feet of her enemies." But what counsels could devise measures to counteract a misfortune which all admitted to be irremediable? What address could stimulate a nation to fresh exertions, on whom such terrible calamities had fallen? "The ruin was so sudden, and so complete, that the most vigorous mind could not grapple with it. There was no proceeding, which ingenuity could devise, or zeal could execute, that presented the slightest chance of success. Submission—unreserved and absolute submission—was all the conquerors had left them. In vain did Napoleon demand men and money. Where were they to be had? The people would not rally round the fugitive, and the greater part of his old army was annihilated. With 60,000 disciplined troops, he was now to meet the shock of confederated Europe—for at Waterloo he had encountered little more than its advanced guard." The only alternative left was an abdication; and on June 22nd, Napoleon formally renounced the throne in favour of the King of Rome, and a provisional Government, consisting of Fouché, Caulincourt, Carnot, Grenier, and Quinette, was nominated.

But this conditional resignation met a furious opposition from the Chamber of Peers. Fierce and inconclusive debates resulted —days passed—the allies were approaching the capital—and it was communicated to Napoleon that while he remained in Paris, there was no chance whatever of pacific arrangements being effected with the allied monarchs. On these representations the ex-Emperor consented to withdraw. On the 29th, he quitted his capital for ever; and repaired to Rochefort, after having in vain applied to the victor of Waterloo for a passport to enable him to proceed to America. In idle projects to effect an escape from France, and elude the vigilance of the British cruisers, a short time was consumed; but, despairing of success, he surrendered himself to the protection of an English commander, and was eventually conveyed to that lone and cheerless island, where a career closed in solitude and captivity, whose noontide lustre had, meteor-like, been dazzling as evanescent.

The convention having been ratified, on the 4th the posts of Neuilly and St. Denis were given up to allied detachments. The French army marched in the direction of the Loire; and

on the 6th, the barriers of the capital were occupied by the confederates. On the 7th, the white standard of the Bourbons replaced the tri-coloured banner of Napoleon—and on the next day, Louis XVIII. re-entered Paris, and the strange history of "the Hundred Days" ended with a general peace.

With the second restoration of the Bourbons, the Duke of Wellington's military career may be considered as having terminated; for although the French army on the Loire assumed a threatening attitude, and declined to acknowledge the monarch whom the allies had replaced, it eventually submitted to the existing Government, and the country was tranquillised.

One duty remains to be discharged; and the professional character of him whose military command, commencing at Assye, and concluding at Waterloo, embrace such opposite service and scenes, shall be briefly and impartially considered.

As a great commander, the amount of Wellington's reputation depends upon a simple question:—Was he the first or second of his age?

"That he was less vast in his designs, less daring in execution, neither so rapid nor so original a commander as Napoleon, must be admitted, and, being later in the field of glory, it is to be presumed that he learned something of the art from that greatest of all masters; yet something besides the difference of genius must be allowed for the difference of situation; Napoleon was never, even in his first campaign of Italy, so harassed by the French, as Wellington was by the English, Spanish, and Portuguese Governments. Their systems of war were, however, alike in principle; their operations being necessarily modified by their different political positions. Great bodily exertion, unceasing watchfulness, exact combinations to protect their flanks and communications, without scattering their forces, these were common to both. In defence firm, cool, enduring; in attack fierce and obstinate; daring, when daring was politic; but always operating by the flanks in preference to the front; in these things they were alike; but, in following up a victory, the English general fell short of the French Emperor. The battle of Wellington was the stroke of a battering-ram—down went the wall in ruins. The battle of Napoleon was the swell and dash of a mighty wave,

before which the barrier yielded, and the roaring flood poured onwards, covering all."

It has been objected to the Duke of Wellington's character as a great man, that he was constitutionally cold and impassable —stern in the exaction of duty—careless in rewarding merit—the end his mighty object—the means a matter of indifference. That charge is false ; and had the publication of his extensive correspondence possessed no other value, it would have proved in an hundred instances, that misfortune obtained his sympathy, and the widow and orphan met frequently in him a warm and an eloquent supporter.

That his firmness approached severity may be imputed rather to the circumstances under which he acted at the moment, than to any natural harshness of disposition. Had he not possessed the sternest determination, the conflicting elements of which his army was composed could neither have been reduced to order, nor could their discipline have been maintained. To restrain military licence, to assure the delinquent that his offences would be punished, examples were necessarily made ; and their salutary effects were best evidenced by the fact, that the conduct of the allied army was as remarkable for peaceable demeanour in cantonments, as it was for its heroism and efficiency in the field.

To form a great general, mental and physical qualities are essential ; and with both Wellington was largely gifted. In the vigour of manhood, few were better fitted to endure privations and fatigue. An economist in time, the space allotted for personal indulgence was brief—his hours for repose were limited—his meals were simple and rapidly despatched—and hence, the greater portion of his time was passed in the saddle or bureau ; and no hospital or cantonment escaped his visits, nor did a letter or report remain unanswered.

In his manner and address the duke was always frank, and, when he pleased, dignified and graceful. Easy of access, the soldier's complaint was as attentively listened to as the remonstrance of the general. If a favour were required, it was promptly granted, or as decisively refused ; and on the merits of a statement, when once a decision was made, influence would be used in vain, and entreaty pass unheeded.

In personal simplicity, the duke's costume was in keeping with his character. He despised everything like parade, and excepting when their services were necessary, dispensed with the attendance of his staff. Nothing could be more striking

than the plainness of his appearance in public, when contrasted with the general frippery and parade of his opponents ; and the peasantry could scarcely be persuaded that the unpretending personage who courteously listened to their story, or returned a passing salute, was that great captain, whom conquest had attended from the Tagus to the Seine.

In estimating the military talents of Napoleon and Wellington —for to compare either with any other commander of the age would be absurd—to the former, a superiority has been generally conceded for the decision with which he followed up a defeat, and the important consequences which always were attendant on his victories. Both were admitted to have possessed an inimitable skill in handling masses of men, with the same facility that ordinary commanders directed the movements of a brigade. Their combinations were beautiful—their conceptions grand—they were not the laboured efforts of military art, but the outbreakings of military genius—formed in a moment—executed as rapidly—changed, should circumstances require, and adapted to meet the emergency that might arise. If Wellington did not push his victories to grand results, let us inquire the causes ; and when Napoleon's military *improvisation* is declared unequalled, let us see how far Wellington's was behind.

The circumstances under which these two great commanders conducted their campaigns, were different ; for Napoleon had never Wellington's difficulties to contend with. The former was a free agent. His battles were delivered to clear away obstacles that impeded an advance, while Wellington's were generally received to enable him to maintain a position in the country. Napoleon, when victorious, had always the means in hand to push his success, and secure the fruits of conquest. Wellington's battles were frequently defensive ; and the heavy repulses which masterly combinations enabled him to inflict, were unadorned with the trophies which accompany a bold advance ; and often, his most brilliant fields were followed by regressive movements, which are always the consequence of defeat and rarely attend on victory.

That Wellington possessed within himself the rapid resources and daring confidence which mark a great commander, his conduct when placed in dangerous positions, or at the crisis of a doubtful day, will best establish. What operations could be more masterly than his retreat across the Tagus, or his advance across the Douro ? What act more daring than to hold the height of Guinaldo with two weak divisions, within cannon

shot of an army strong enough not to defeat, but annihilate him? Look at the sudden ruin inflicted on Marmont at Salamanca—the seizure of Arinez—the counter-stroke at Sorauren. Follow the footsteps of the Peninsular army from Rolica to Toulouse. Commence his history at Assye, and close it on the night of Waterloo. Test his military character by his acts—let him then dispute the palm with Napoleon—and who will pronounce him second to any general of the age?

In the prime of manhood, Wellington's appearance indicated both activity and strength. In height he was nearly five feet ten inches; his shoulders were broad, his chest expansive, his arms long; the hand large, but well formed; the wrist unusually bony; the whole frame-work evincing a capability of enduring the extremity of fatigue. The keen grey eyes were brilliant; and his sight remarkably acute. His face was long, the features striking; the nose aquiline; the brow open and developed; and "the lower portion of the face contradicting, in a singular manner, the stern and almost iron expression of all above the mouth."

The general expression of the duke's face was cheerful. In, probably, the most trying moment of his career, when the failure of the attack on the great breach at Badajoz was communicated, he was observed to be "pale, but perfectly collected." In the hour of his triumph, when he had ascertained the extent of his conquest, and found that the laurels of Salamanca were added to his wreath, the admirable historian of his wars thus describes him as he stood:—"I saw him late in the evening of that great day, when the advancing flashes of cannon and musketry, stretching as far as the eye could command, showed in the darkness how well the field was won; he was alone, the flush of victory was on his brow, and his eyes were eager and watchful, but his voice was calm, and even gentle. More than the rival of Marlborough, since he had defeated greater warriors than Marlborough ever encountered, with a prescient pride he seemed only to accept this glory as an earnest of greater things."

When a century shall have passed away; when beauty fades into kindred dust, statesmen are forgotten, the rottenness of demagogues is exposed, and a new generation wonders only how a past one could be fooled—in the page of England's history *one name* will stand out in bold relief—and one consenting voice pronounce—that the greatest soldier Britain had produced, was ARTHUR, DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

CHRONOLOGY

A.D.	MONTH	AGE	
1769	May 1		Birth.
1787	March 7	17	Joins the army.
1794	May	25	Goes to the Netherlands.
1795	March		Returns to England.
1797	Feb.	27	Arrives at Calcutta.
1798			Lord Mornington, Governor-General.
1799	Feb.		War against Tippoo.
1799	May		Capture of Seringapatam.
1803	Aug. 11		Capture of Ahmednuggur.
1803	Sept. 23	34	Victory of Assye.
1803	Nov. 27		Victory of Argaum.
1804		35	Returns to England.
1807			Irish Secretary.
1807		38	Siege of Copenhagen.
1808	April		Wellesley, lieutenant-general.
1808	July 20	39	Wellesley arrives in Portugal.
1808	Aug. 17		Battle of Rolica.
1808	Aug. 21		Battle of Vimeiro.
1808	Aug. 30		The Convention of Cintra.
1808	Sept.		Wellesley returns to England.
1808	Dec.		Napoleon at Madrid.
1809	Jan. 16		Battle of Corunna.
1809	April		Wellesley returns to Portugal.
1809	May	40	Wellesley crosses the Douro.
1809	July 27 July 28		Battle of Talavera.
1809	Aug.		Wellesley retreats.
1809			Massena appointed by Napoleon.
1810	July	41	Massena captures Ciudad Rodrigo.

A.D.	MONTH	AGE	
1810	Sept. 27	41	Battle of Busaco.
1810	Oct.		Wellington retreats into the Lines of Torres Vedras.
1811	April 3		Battle of Sabugal.
1811	May 5	42	Battle of Fuentes d'Oñoro.
1811	May 16		Battle of Albuera.
1811	Sept. 24		Battle of El Bodon.
1812	Jan. 19		The storming of Ciudad Rodrigo.
1812	April 7		Capture of Badajoz.
1812	July 22	43	Battle of Salamanca.
1812	Aug.		Joseph Buonaparte leaves Madrid.
1812	Sept.		Wellington, commander-in-chief of the Spanish armies.
1813	June 14 June 15	44	English army crosses the Ebro.
1813	June 21		Battle of Vittoria.
1813			Wellington created field-marshal.
1813	July 28 July 30		Battle of Sorauren.
1813	Aug. 31		Capture of San Sebastian.
1813	Oct. 7		Passage of the Bidassoa.
1813	Nov. 10		Battle of the Nivelle.
1813	Dec. 10		Allies cross the Nive.
1814	Feb.		Passage of the Adour.
1814	Feb. 27		Battle of Orthez.
1814	March 12		Allies enter Bordeaux.
1814	April 10		Battle of Toulouse.
1814			Wellington, British Ambassador.
1814	May 11	45	Wellington created duke.
1814	June		Returns to England.
1815	Jan.		Goes to the Vienna Congress.
1815	March 1		Napoleon lands in France.
1815	March 20		Napoleon enters Paris.
1815	April 5		Wellington commander in the Netherlands.
1815	June 16	46	Battle of Quatre Bras.
1815	June 18		Waterloo.
1815	Nov.		Wellington commander of the allied army of occupation.
1817		48	Chief commissioner of arbitration.
1818	Oct.	49	Evacuation of France.
1818	Oct.		Duke accepts seat in Lord Liverpool's Cabinet.

A.D.	MONTH	AGE	
1821	July 17	52	Coronation of George IV.
1822	Sept.	53	Wellington goes to the Congress of Vienna.
1826		57	Wellington, special Ambassador to St. Petersburg.
1827	Jan. 7		Wellington is made Commander-in-Chief.
1827	April		Leaves the Cabinet. Resigns command.
1827	Aug.	58	Resumes command of the Army.
1828	Jan.		Wellington, Prime Minister.
1828			Repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts.
1829	April		Emancipation Bill passed.
1830	Nov.	61	Resignation of Wellington's Ministry.
1831	April 27		Windows of Apsley House broken by the mob.
1832	June	63	Reform Bill passed.
1832	June 18		Wellington attacked by mob.
1834	June 10	65	Chancellor of Oxford University.
1834	Nov. 12		Dismissal of Melbourne Ministry.
1834			Wellington, Foreign Minister in Peel's Cabinet.
1835	April		Resignation of Ministry.
1841		72	Wellington in Peel's second Cabinet.
1846	June 25	77	Wellington carries the repeal of the Corn Laws in the House of Lords.
1852	Sept. 14	83	Death.
1852	Nov. 18		Funeral in St. Paul's Cathedral.

APPENDIX

THE Duke of Wellington lived for thirty-seven years after Waterloo, but it proved to be his last engagement on the field of battle. The fame of his victorious campaigns in India, in the Peninsula, and at Waterloo was sufficient to have entitled him to retirement; but an existence of inactivity was impossible to one whose life for so long had been a series of combats. The period of peace that succeeded that battle was maintained for many years, and during the remainder of his life the duke occupied himself for the most part with politics. After the victory at Waterloo, Wellington was given command of the Army of Occupation in France. He returned to England in 1817, when the evacuation of that country had been decided on, and accepted the Master-Generalship of the Ordnance with a seat in the Cabinet, thus lending the weight of his name to sustain the Tory party. He acted as Lord High Constable at the coronation of George IV., and when Castlereagh committed suicide in August, 1822, Wellington became British representative at the Congress at Vienna. In 1826 he visited the Tsar Nicholas at St. Petersburg to discover his views on the Turkish question, and to prevent, if possible, hostilities between Russia and the Ottoman Empire. The following year he was appointed Commander-in-Chief, and in 1828, soon after the death of Canning, he became Prime Minister, with Peel as Leader in the Commons. It was a post for which he felt himself to be unsuited, and which he accepted only on the direct call of the king. But friction arose in the Cabinet, and the Canningites resigned, leaving a purely Tory Government. In 1829, though opposed by many of his friends, Wellington carried through Parliament the Bill for the Emancipation of Roman Catholics in Ireland, but refusing any further reforms, in 1830 his Government resigned. His opposition to reform at this time made him intensely unpopular, and in April, 1831, the mob broke the windows of Apsley House. But his unpopularity was short-lived, and in 1834 he was elected Chancellor of the University of Oxford. Late in that year Peel formed a Ministry, Wellington

becoming Foreign Secretary ; however, it only lasted our months. For the six following years Peel and Wellington were in opposition ; but in 1841 Wellington took a seat in the Cabinet under Peel, although he held no office. In 1842 he was reappointed Commander-in-Chief, and pressed upon Peel an increase in the naval and military establishments; but the country was wholly occupied with the corn laws, and the Government took no heed. In 1846 Peel, having passed the Corn Bill, was defeated on the Irish Bill, and resigned. Wellington then retired altogether from political life. "It would have been well perhaps," says the writer in *The Dictionary of National Biography*, "for his reputation if he had stood aloof from party altogether, but that was impossible. His weight and capacity made the politicians turn to him for help ; and he was himself a man of strong and definite convictions." As Commander-in-Chief he showed most decided Conservative tendencies, and was no great believer in a special military education. In 1837 he was elected Master of the Trinity House, was appointed Ranger of Hyde Park and St. James' Park in 1850, and took considerable personal interest in the Great Exhibition of 1851. He died at Walmer Castle in the afternoon of September 14th, 1852, and was buried with much state and impressiveness in the crypt of St. Paul's Cathedral on November 18th. A splendid monument, designed by Alfred Stevens, was raised by the nation to his memory in St. Paul's. The monument has been pronounced as "probably the finest plastic work of modern times."

NOTES

WILLIAM HAMILTON MAXWELL, born at Newry, co. Down, Ireland, in 1792, was the son of a merchant, James Maxwell, and on December 7th, 1807, he entered Trinity College, Dublin. In 1812 he seems to have obtained a captaincy in the Army, and apparently went to the Peninsula, afterwards being present at Waterloo. He then returned to Newry, and spent his time as a country gentleman hunting and shooting. Shortly afterwards he took Holy Orders, and in 1820 was presented to the living of Ballagh in Connemara. In 1825 he published his first book, *O'Hara, or* 1798, an historical novel, which was succeeded by *Wild Sports of the West* in 1832, and from that time books came rapidly from his pen. It is believed that in 1844 he was deprived of his living, and, having retired to Musselburgh, near Edinburgh, he died on December 29th, 1850.

His *Life of the Duke of Wellington* was first published in three volumes in 1839, and has since been repeatedly re-issued, sometimes in full and sometimes abridged. In writing this life Maxwell relied largely upon Napier, and consequently the book suffers from the party bias which that historian always felt when dealing with questions of politics. Professor Owen, in his *History of the Peninsular War*, points out that Napier is entirely forgetful of the insight and firmness of Castlereagh, who first 'discovered' Wellington, and then supported him in the face of the bitterest abuse. Maxwell again follows Napier in his prejudice against the Spaniards, and is apt to forget that they were of great service in intercepting reinforcements, in obtaining information, and in causing a large portion of the French army to be engaged in watching their movements.

P. 1. Arthur Wellesley was fourth son of Garrett Wellesley, first Earl of Mornington by Anne, eldest daughter of Arthur Hill, Viscount Dungannon. He was born in 1769, and the exact day is variously given as March 6th, April 30th, and May 1st. He himself always kept the last of these dates as his birthday. The place of birth is also uncertain, one authority asserting that it was

Dangan Castle in Meath, another that it was Lord Mornington's residence in Dublin.

The date and place of birth of Napoleon Buonaparte, born in the same year, are also doubtful.

P. 5. When asked if his experience in this campaign was of use, the duke in later life replied, "Why, I learnt what one ought not to do, and that is always something."

P. 6. Pitt on Wellington: "I never met any military officer with whom it is so satisfactory to converse. He states every difficulty before he undertakes any service, but none after he has undertaken it."

P. 7. Maxwell is perhaps rather severe on Tippoo, since his desire to drive out the English was only natural, and his vices were not much more glaring than those of the rulers around.

P. 8. Message from Buonaparte: "You have already been informed of my arrival on the borders of the Red Sea, with an innumerable and invincible army, full of the desire of delivering you from the iron yoke of England."

P. 17. Wellesley most strongly objected to his supersession by Baird.

P. 23. Battle of Assye: "I determined upon attack immediately. It was certainly a most desperate one, but our guns were not silenced" (*Despatches*).

P. 39. Wellesley was in favour of a blockade and against a bombardment.

P. 45. Portugal was an ancient ally of England, and English merchants were numerous in Lisbon, whilst Buonaparte's pretext was that Portugal refused to close her ports.

P. 63. Sir John Moore thought that a rapid advance ought to have been made, and that had Burrard allowed Wellesley to pursue, "I have not a doubt, from everything I have heard, that the French never could have reached Lisbon, but must have surrendered to him in the field" (*Diary of Moore*).

P. 67. Sir Arthur's advice was in effect: "Inform General Junot that the admiral disapproves of the armistice, and give him forty-eight hours' notice of its suspension. If Junot will not renew negotiations independently of the Russians, then push forward and compel him to accept your own terms" (*Sir H. Maxwell's "Life of Wellington."*)

P. 69. Before leaving the Army he was presented by the general officers with a piece of plate value one thousand guineas as a mark of their "high esteem and respect" and of "the satisfaction we must ever feel in having had the good fortune to serve under your command."

P. 71. This report ended the professional careers of Sir Hew Dalrymple and Sir Harry Burrard, whilst Wellesley himself was very dissatisfied with the result of the inquiry.

P. 87. The reason why Napoleon left Spain appears in reality to have been the perception that no vast success could be looked for there, and consequently he took care never to return. "He had had enough of the country, of the people, of the task he had undertaken."

P. 95. It is interesting to compare this account of the retreat with that given by Sir J. F. Maurice in his book *The Diary of Sir John Moore*, in which he speaks of these last movements as "the boldest, the most successful, the most brilliant stroke of war of all time." Moore certainly did draw a considerable portion of the French army out of the main field of operations, and so gave to Spain a most valuable breathing-space; but it is a little difficult not to think that such extreme praise is hardly deserved, when the actual results of the expedition are considered.

P. 95. Colborne wrote of Moore: "He had firmness, resolution, activity, courage, and prudence; and from a long service with his troops, and his being the principal in the operations of the landings in Holland and Egypt, he was perfectly acquainted with the superiority of the British soldier to any other" (*Life of Lord Seaton*).

P. 99. The troops under Wellesley's commands numbered about 21,000, and with the expected reinforcements would amount to 34,000.

P. 101. Later D'Argenton escaped to England, and was provided for by the Government.

P. 105. Wellesley in his *Despatches*, however, wrote: "The movement of General Murray upon the flank was decisive of the whole position."

P. 115. Wellington denied that the Spanish general gave this reason: "Cuesta made many other foolish excuses, but that was not one." Cuesta "did not want courage nor sense either, but was an obstinate old man and had no military genius."

P. 127. Some military authorities hold such a march to be impossible.

P. 127. "The battle of Talavera was the hardest fought of modern times" (*Despatches*).

Oman, writing of the Spaniards, says, "It is more just to admire the constancy with which a nation so handicapped persisted in the hopeless struggle than to condemn it for the incapacity of its generals, the ignorance of its officers, the unsteadiness of its raw levies."

P. 134. There was a quarrel ending in a duel between Castlereagh and Canning, Lord Liverpool succeeded Castlereagh, whilst Lord Wellesley was recalled to take the Foreign Office. Mr. Perceval became Prime Minister.

P. 135. Maxwell, following Napier, harps on the fact that Wellesley was not properly supported by the Ministry; but at

this time Great Britain was maintaining her own forces, was subsidising the Juntas, and also supplying largely the wants of the Spanish and Portuguese troops. It is indeed wonderful how those in power in England did maintain the war in the face of tremendous opposition.

P. 140. The duke regarded André Massena, Prince of Essling, as the most skilful of Napoleon's lieutenants. Massena rose from the ranks, his father keeping a tavern near Monte Carlo.

P. 149. "Among all the suffering millions of Portugal not a spy had been found to warn the invader of the existence in his line of march of fifty miles of new fortifications, comprising one hundred and twenty-six closed works and mounting two hundred and forty-seven guns" (*Sir H. Maxwell's "Life of Wellington"*).

P. 150. It was, however, stated by General de Marbot that Massena and Junot desired to attack the Lines of Torres Vedras, but that Ney absolutely refused to do so.

P. 154. Wellington as Marshal-General of Portugal armed in some fashion the whole male population of the country.

P. 165. "Nobody entertains a doubt that Imaz sold Badajoz. He appears to have surrendered as soon as he could after he knew that relief was coming to him, lest his garrison should prevent the surrender when they should be certain of the truth of the intelligence of Massena's retreat" (*Despatches*).

P. 186. Captain Ramsay was killed at Waterloo.

P. 189. Wellington said of the Battle of Fuentes d'Oñoro: "Lord Liverpool was quite right not to move thanks for the battle of Fuentes, though it was the most difficult I was ever concerned in, and against the greatest odds. We had very nearly three to one against us engaged; above four to one of cavalry; and, moreover, our cavalry had not a gallop in them, while some of that of the enemy was fresh, and in excellent order. If Bony had been there we should have been beaten."

P. 191. Wellington described the escape of the garrison of Almeida as "the most disgraceful military event that has yet happened to us."

P. 191. Massena was superseded owing to Napoleon's dissatisfaction.

P. 197. William Carr Beresford, an illegitimate son of George de la Poer Beresford, Earl of Tyrone, was born on October 2nd, 1768, entered the Army in 1785, was promoted lieutenant in 1790, and captain in 1791. After serving with Lord Hood at Toulon, he was made lieutenant-colonel in 1794; he then went to India, and from there to Egypt, to the Cape, and to Madeira. In August, 1808, he arrived at Lisbon with the rank of major-general, and shared in Moore's retreat. On March 2nd, 1809, he returned from England to reorganise the Portuguese army, and by a process of weeding out he formed a serviceable body of men. His discipline

was strict, but he succeeded in introducing an 'esprit de corps' which before had been wanting. When General Hill returned to England, Beresford succeeded him, and won the battle of Albuera. At Salamanca he was wounded, but was present at the battles of Vittoria and the Pyrenees without any special command, whilst at those of Nivelle and Orthez he commanded the centre. In 1814 he was made Governor of Jersey, in 1822 he was promoted to lieutenant-general, and in 1825 to full general. He died January 8th, 1854.

P. 198. "The blame for all this has, as usual among military writers, been thrown on the British Government, because they had not furnished siege material; but, in fact, Wellington had made no demand for such. He relied on what he could get from Elvas, and it is best to admit frankly that this was one of the rare occasions on which he exhibited want of foresight" (*Sir. H. Maxwell's* "*Life of Wellington*").

Pp. 204, 211. Robert Craufurd, third son of Sir Alexander Craufurd, was born on May 5th, 1764, entered the Army in 1779, was promoted lieutenant in 1781 and captain in 1783. He served for some time in India, and in 1797 was given his lieutenant-colonelcy, whilst in 1805 he was promoted colonel. In 1807 he went with Sir David Baird to the Peninsula, and there joined Sir John Moore. In 1809 he was again ordered to the Peninsula, and joined Wellesley on the day after the battle of Talavera. As commander of the light brigade he showed unequalled brilliancy, and won the confidence and love of his men to an extraordinary degree; but his operations on the Coa in July, 1810, have been much criticised. The retreat of the English army to the Lines of Torres Vedras was covered by his troops, a task of real difficulty, which was, however, magnificently carried out. In the battle of Fuentes d'Oñoro it was again the light division who were called on to cover the army during the change of position which Wellington found necessary. At the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo Craufurd was shot while leading on his men, and died on January 24th, 1812. He was without doubt the most brilliant leader of light troops who served in the Peninsula.

P. 220. The real cause of the loss of Badajoz by the French seems to have been that there was no commander with sufficient power to reconcile all the opposing interests of the various marshals or combine all the movements of the various armies. Napoleon tried the impossible task of himself directing his generals, when at such a distance he could not know their difficulties or opportunities.

P. 223. "In its best days Salamanca is said to have contained no fewer than eight thousand native students, and seven thousand from foreign countries: when the Peninsular War began, the number little exceeded three thousand, among whom a few Irish were the only foreigners. But Salamanca was still an important and a famous place: popular fiction had made its name familiar

to those who were unacquainted with its history; while to the antiquary, the historian, and the philosopher, it is a city of no ordinary interest" (*Southey*).

P. 226. Before the campaign of Salamanca Wellington had some 75,000 men under his immediate orders, whilst General Hill had some 25,000; there were also in the field Portuguese militia and several Spanish armies whose fluctuating numbers it was impossible to count. The French army under Soult numbered 64,000; under Marmont, 69,000; under Joseph, 19,000; under Souham, 53,000; under Souchet, 74,000, the total being 279,000, and this at the very time that Napoleon marched with 600,000 men against Russia.

P. 243. Wellington gave as the reason of the failure of the siege of Burgos the total lack of the means of transport either for guns or stores: "I could not find means of moving even one gun from Madrid."

P. 255. Ballasteros objected to the Cortes appointing Wellington commander-in-chief of the Spanish armies.

P. 269. Near Vittoria the Black Prince defeated Du Guesclin.

P. 272. Excepting that of his great brother when retreating from Moscow, no army since the days of Xerxes was so overloaded with spoil and baggage as that of Joseph Buonaparte" (*Victories of the British Armies*).

P. 274. After Vittoria Wellington was raised to the rank of field-marshal. He already received £5,000 a year as commander in the field, but this promotion carried with it an addition of £7,000.

P. 283. Lord Fitzroy Somerset, afterwards Field-Marshal Lord Raglan, G.C.B.

P. 285. Speaking of Sorauren, Wellington wrote: "I never saw such fighting as we have had here. It began on the 25th, and, excepting the 29th, when not a shot was fired, we had it every day till the 2nd. The battle of the 28th was fair bludgeon work" (*Letter to Bentinck*).

P. 292. This charge of Admiralty neglect is made by Napier, but apparently without sufficient evidence. The war with America had strained the resources, and at the time it was found difficult to obtain men for the ships. Also the rapid success of the campaign of 1813 had not been expected, and therefore had not been prepared for.

P. 321. In the battle of Orthez Wellington was wounded for the first and last time.

P. 329. M. Brialmont has described the state of things: "With an energy and a patriotism which were too rare at that period, Soult made incredible efforts to re-establish public opinion, and called upon the French to defend at least the soil of their country against foreign armies. 'Let us show ourselves Frenchmen,' he cried, 'and die with arms in our hands, rather than survive our dishonour'" (*Gleig's "Life of Wellington"*).

P. 331. See *Memoirs of Napoleon*, by Bourrienne, in *The Library of Standard Biographies* edition, p. 462.

P. 333. "As for Wellington, out of eight years of married life, more than six had been spent in active service abroad. Most of his generals and subordinate officers had been home on leave, many of them had brought their wives to the Peninsula during the war, but he had never quitted his post. His two sons, whom he had never heard address him as father, were now schoolboys; during all these years he had never set eyes either on his wife or any of his near relatives, except his brother Henry. There is something of Spartan grandeur in the lonely, laborious figure" (*Sir H. Maxwell's "Life of Wellington"*).

P. 350. Sir Thomas Picton was born in August, 1758, was gazetted in 1771, and promoted in 1777 to a lieutenancy, and to a captaincy in 1778. In 1783 he was placed upon half-pay, and spent twelve years on the family estate in Pembrokeshire. During 1795 to 1803 he was employed in the West Indies, for the greater portion of the time as Governor of Trinidad. On April 25th, 1808, he was promoted major-general, and in 1809 accompanied the expedition against Flushing. Early in 1810 he joined Wellington's army in Portugal, and was placed in command of the 3rd Division. Here he displayed his brilliant qualities in the battles of Busaco, of Fuentes d'Oñoro, and of Ciudad Rodrigo. In March, 1812, Badajoz was invested, and in the storming of the castle Picton was wounded, and so was unable to take part in the battle of Salamanca. The division, however, commanded by him was again to the front at Vittoria and Toulouse, and he received the thanks of the House of Commons. He was wounded at Quatre Bras, and killed at Waterloo. When once he had joined the Peninsular army, he became Wellington's right hand.

P. 359. This is a mistake, as the two generals met at the village of Genappe.

P. 365. "The place that I should be inclined to assign to Wellington as a general would be one in the very first rank—equal, if not superior, to that given to Napoleon. In estimating the comparative merits of these illustrious rivals, it may be conceded that the schemes of the French Emperor were more comprehensive, his genius more dazzling, and his imagination more vivid than Wellington's. On the other hand, the latter excelled in that coolness of judgment which Napoleon himself described as 'the foremost quality in a general'" (*Lord Roberts' "The Rise of Wellington"*).

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